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ABSTRACT

This workshop kit consists of: (1) 30-page "Leaders Guide and Handout Masters"; (2) 12-minute videotape, "Lines in the Sand"; (3) special 24-page issue of the journal "Media & Values" on the theme "The Media: in War and Peace"; and (4) an 8-page booklet on the basics of media literacy, "From Awareness to Action: Media Literacy for the '90s." The kit is designed for a two-part study of the role of media in society by using the coverage of the Persian Gulf War as a case study. By using background materials, specialized exercises, action suggestions, and analytical frameworks, this kit provides the tools viewers need to understand the media's continuing role in society and explore implications of that role for the citizen. The two sessions focus on: (1) "The Right to Know: How the Pentagon Managed the Media"; and (2) "Us Against Them: How the Media Create Enemies." Student materials, handouts, background readings, and follow up materials are included. (EH)

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IMAGES OF CONFLICT

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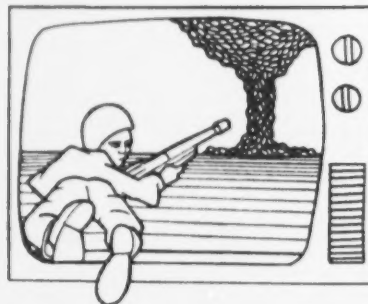
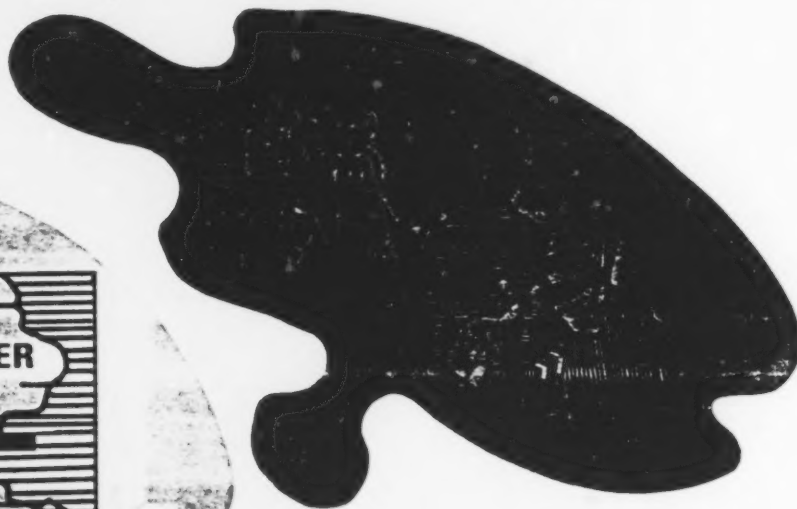
Learning From Media Coverage of the Gulf War A Media Literacy Workshop Kit™

Leader's Guide and Handout Masters

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Images of Conflict

Leader's Guide and Handout Masters

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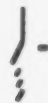
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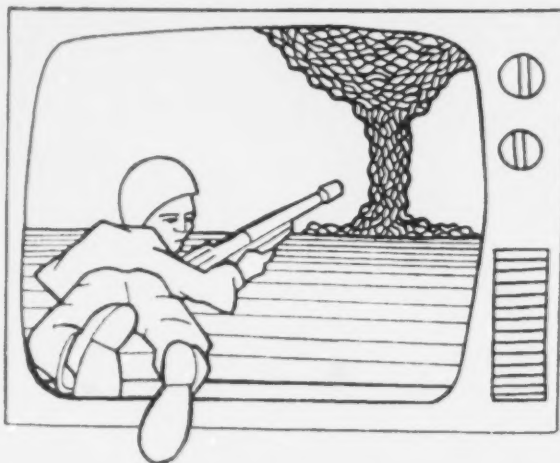
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What You Need to Know to Lead This Workshop

Images of Conflict



Coverage of the Persian Gulf War captivated the nation. For the first time ever, the war was fought in real time in our living rooms. From sofas and chairs in front of our TV sets, we watched bombs drop and people die.

Few of us would deny that watching "the fireworks" over Baghdad was a far different experience than hearing radio reports about the bombing of Hiroshima 50 years ago days or hours after the fact.

What effect did this fascination with the TV view of the war have on the conflict? Was the war we saw on the screen balanced or biased? What does television's ability to bring us a direct view of the battlefield imply about future wars and even domestic conflicts?

The impact of these questions extends far beyond any light they shed on reporting and journalistic decisions during the few short weeks of war. Study of the media's role in the Gulf War reveals a new and still little-understood factor—the complex economic and communication links that make the media a major player in modern wars and political disputes. Until we understand these connections, we have little hope of breaking the pattern of conflict, either for ourselves or for our children.

Using a unique combination of background material and specialized exercises, action suggestions and analytical frameworks, *Images of Conflict: Learning from Media Coverage of the Gulf War* provides the tools viewers need to understand its implications for the media's continuing role in society.

The workshop kit's two sessions are specifically designed to relate these problems to media interactions taking place

every day, thus helping participants apply the lessons of this wartime media laboratory to their day-to-day media interactions. The sessions provide the necessary background and guidance to address these issues and begin to apply them to current events and continuing coverage.

The kit also includes a follow-up section (see the last pages of this booklet), with suggestions for further activities and additional study units on the media in war and peace.

***"The Pentagon won ground superiority
over the press before it achieved air
superiority over the Iraqis."***

Walter Goodman, *New York Times* Reporter.

This targeted analysis is especially valuable because during the war itself, an in-depth view of wartime media coverage was almost impossible. The ongoing drama was too intense for an objective view. But since the cease-fire, many experts have questioned the ways in which the war we saw on the screen was shaped by the needs of government policy, reporting practices and biases and media assumptions about what the public would like to see.

From-the-scene TV pictures of this short, triumphant little war were different, many analysts noted, from the bloody images transmitted during such longer combats as the Vietnam War and World War II.

"We were inundated with images of technology," comments author William F. Fore, a lecturer in communications at the Yale Divinity School, writing in *Media&Values'* special issue on the war, *The Media: In War and Peace*. "Powerful and exotic airplanes taking to the sky night after night, tanks speeding across the desert... 'smart' bombs and 'surgical strikes.' The signification was clear: technology not only bestows power and superiority but enables us to be humane, even in the conduct of war."

Censorship and enemy casualties were also the subject of much after-the-fact discussion. But despite the emphasis on supposedly "humane" weapons, enemy damage during the war received little screen time, many commentators agree. Hugo Young of the well-known English newspaper, the *Guardian Weekly*, put it this way: "When we saw the damage of the Scud missiles or the wreckage of war in Khafji, we got a glimpse of what it was really like, while discovering later that this, too, was only part of a wider action."

Although media censorship was not discussed much onscreen, there is general agreement that coverage of the Persian Gulf War was severely limited by the U.S. government. The number of reporters on the scene was restricted. Journalists permitted in the Gulf were organized into a pool whose itinerary and access to sources was determined by the Department of Defense. Vietnam-era freedom of movement was gone.

For the most part, news organizations responded to the restrictions by fully cooperating. But did they err in becoming "cheerleaders" for the war, as many charge? Was it appropriate to demonize Saddam Hussein—a former U.S. ally—as "a Hitler," a "geo-political glutton," "an assassin?" The media watchdog group, Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (F.A.I.R.), called the press' performance one of the "most disturbing episodes in U.S. journalistic history—a period when many reporters for national media abandoned any pretense of neutrality or reportorial distance in favor of boosterism for the war effort."

Despite the enormous press fanfare, a study of public knowledge of the war by the University of Massachusetts' Center for the Study of Communication (see page two of *The Media in War and Peace* for complete reference) came to the ironic conclusion that "the more TV people watched, the less they knew."

Although 81 percent of their sample group could identify

the name of the missile used to shoot down Iraqi scuds, those same respondents could not answer questions about the administration's policy or actions immediately prior to the invasion. The center's researchers concluded that the public was *selectively misinformed*. "All the facts that we asked people about have, at one time or another, been reported," they wrote. "Their overall presence in the news coverage is, nevertheless, very low. When compared to the presence of information about the mechanics of war or the administration's view of the situation, it is clear that information gets lost. Whatever else this signifies, it is not good journalism."

Analysis of media coverage of the war reveals a second, equally disturbing lesson. Reporting on the war was not an exception to the rule of a free press and a well-informed public, but an object lesson in how the news media operates on a day-to-day basis. All too frequently, the source relationships, deadlines and biases encouraged the shaping of stories by government agencies and the polarization of opposing sides of a conflict to enhance the dramatic value of a story.

All the planning and expert analysis that went into this special issue of *Media&Values* is reflected in the workshop kit. But it does more. By providing a means for individualized reflection as well as action, it helps participants understand that the media-viewer relationship is active, not passive.

How to Use *Images of Conflict*

Images of Conflict can be used as a two-part series held on alternate weeks or an all-day workshop with its two parts divided into morning and afternoon sessions.

Who Should Sponsor and Attend

Adult education classes, church and synagogue discussion groups, political discussion clubs, media workshops and current events forums are all possible sponsors.

The workshop instructions are designed for groups of 25-40 participants. If more than 40 people wish to attend, it is best to hold two sessions or have a team co-lead the sessions. For effective group facilitation, a single leader would have no more than 40 participants, unless the leader is experienced at large group facilitation.

Who Can Lead the Sessions

Any experienced teacher, leader or group facilitator should be able to effectively lead *Images of Conflict*. No special expertise in media or communications is required. It is important, however, for leaders to carefully prepare each session, reading the recommended background article in

Media&Values and copying handouts, as suggested.

Key Concepts in *Images of Conflict*

Before leading any of the sessions, we suggest that you read the enclosed article *From Awareness to Action: Media Literacy for the '90s*. This document outlines the educational strategy and philosophy of the Center for Media and Values.

"The military had a list of topics that journalists were not allowed to report upon... Reporters who wrote critical or questioning stories were often denied future access by the military."

Michael Linfield, author, *"Hear No Evil, See No Evil, Speak No Evil: The Press and the Persian Gulf War."*

In Session One:

The Right to Know: How the Pentagon Managed the Media examines the historical precedent for the press restrictions we saw in the Gulf War. Participants look closely at what we actually saw, focusing on techniques such as the use of euphemistic language and the fine-tuning of images. An integral part of Session One is the videotape *Lines in the Sand*, for which Session One is a study guide. *Lines in the Sand* provides images from the War as well as historical context.

Remember that *Images of Conflict* is not designed to critique the Gulf War conflict itself. It is designed to critique the role of the media as they reported it. You may find that some people in your group have difficulty separating analysis of the media's role from criticism or support of the war itself. Focus discussions on coverage and not on the political issues involved in the war. Though it is difficult to separate political questions from questions of what we saw and why, it is possible to frame the debate in a way that acknowledges the diversity of political opinions available and how these were or were not covered during the wartime period.

Using the Video, *Lines in the Sand*

The videotape *Lines in the Sand* is a key element of Session One. You'll need to carefully prepare yourself and your group for its use. Be sure to watch the videotape ahead of time so that you know what's coming. The Awareness activity in Session One and the directions for viewing the video are designed to prepare your group by:

1. Encouraging participants to recall media images from the Vietnam War so that these will be fresher and therefore more relevant when they are discussed in the videotape.
2. Asking participants to look for certain phrases that might be surprising, like "the war was a kind of national therapy session" (see the Leader's Guide for Session One).

If, after viewing the videotape, you think more preparation is needed (or if you think other phrases need to be mentioned beforehand), consider adding your own preparation for the video or, alternately, show a shorter segment of the video. Like all media, *Lines in the Sand* has its own political perspective. Don't take its politics for granted. Encourage participants to challenge its interpretation of facts, just as you would U.S. State Department briefings.

In Session Two:

Us Against Them: How the Media Create Enemies, enlarges the discussion to consider how news media represent conflict in general. The press' remarkable rush to demonize the Iraqi enemy was not a unique instance of starkly drawn lines of opposition. In her article, *The More We Watched The Less We Knew*, Rosalind Silver suggests a provocative parallel with everyday presentation of the news. "Race riots, urban conflicts, even political campaigns provide day-to-day examples of public relations distortion and stereotyping that polarize society in the guise of information or entertainment."

Do journalists distort conflict in an effort to heighten the drama of news stories?

Session Two suggests this may be the case. The session draws a parallel between the way news media "polarized" opposing sides of the War, and the way news makers routinely present other types of conflict. Although this technique enhances news' entertainment value, do news organizations have an additional obligation to create contexts for debate that encourage constructive solutions? These questions are at the heart of Session Two.

- Session Two calls for you to pre-record a TV news program, then choose one news story from the broadcast for analysis. Naturally, some news stories will be more effective than others. If possible, record several programs in order to give yourself a generous choice of which story illustrates the "us versus them" or "them versus them" concept best (see Session Two's Leader's Guide). You'll probably want to begin recording several days before the session.
- Session Two ends with an activity in which participants

become "citizen reporters." Participants are asked to decide how to gather information about a story of local concern so that their coverage encourages a solution rather than only highlighting conflict. The key to the success of this activity is its "citizen" character. The activity is not designed to suggest that news media should act like "citizen reporters," but that citizens should be gathering their own information — at least sometimes — in order to reduce the impact of "us versus them" news gathering.

One final point about this activity. The *Citizen Reporter's Worksheet*, included as a handout, uses the same Awareness—Analysis—Reflection—Action process as the Leader's Guide. This is no accident. The A-A-R-A process provides an excellent framework for all kinds of community action.

Do not assume, however, that your group will be able to easily complete the handout. If your group members are unfamiliar with the problem they choose, you may wish to have them write answers only to part one and part two. See *From Awareness to Action: Media Literacy for the '90s* for more about the A-A-R-A process.

Suggestions for Leading the Workshops

- The left column of the Leader's Guide provides a quick outline of the session. If you've read the material through two or three times, you should be able to lead the sessions mainly from this outline. The right column gives more detailed information, like discussion questions and general notes in case you forget or don't have as much time to prepare. You'll probably want to make notes in the left column or highlight important questions or instructions with a bright-colored marker.
- Suggested language has been prepared for giving instructions (for example in the *Describe the Activity* sections). Use these phrases as a guide, but feel free to put the directions in your own words.
- Providing an appropriate "environment" as part of your preparation for each session can markedly enhance its effectiveness. Posters, T-shirts, buttons, special Gulf War issues of newspapers and magazines can provide concrete examples of wartime image-making and can also transform sometimes dull meeting rooms into stimulating learning spaces. See page 25 for additional suggestions.

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Evaluations

Evaluations are a leader's best friend. Be sure to save five to 10 minutes at the end of each workshop session to get feedback that will improve the effectiveness of the sessions. Evaluations will also make it apparent which concepts participants understood best.

An evaluation form is included on pages 23 and 24, but your evaluation can also take the form of a frank discussion at the end of the session. Ask participants which sections worked best, reviewing each exercise in turn. Pause after asking the question, allowing time for participants to formulate and call out their thoughts. Encourage them to make specific suggestions for improving the session.

Or, on a piece of paper, ask participants to complete the statement, "My lasting impression of this session was that..." and "The one thing I would change about this workshop is...". Comments and feedback are valuable in shaping future workshops. They are also helpful for you as a group leader seeking to tailor future sessions to the needs of participants.

Additional Resource

As this guide went to press we discovered an additional resource that could be invaluable for some leaders. *Hear No Evil, See No Evil, Speak No Evil: The Press and the Persian Gulf War*, by Michael Linfield, is a comprehensive 15-page review and analysis of the major media events and censorship issues in the Gulf War. With over 150 footnotes from the daily press, opinion journals and historical references, the article traces the history of U.S. wartime censorship to establish a background for analyzing freedom of press precedents set by Gulf War restrictions. At-cost copies are \$3 from the *Beverly Hills Bar Journal*, Attn. Marc Meadow, 300 S. Beverly Drive, Ste. 201, Beverly Hills, CA 90212, (310)553-6644.

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Images of Conflict



The Right to Know: How the Pentagon Managed the Media

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the way the Persian Gulf War was represented by news media.
- Analyze ways in which the media guide public opinion and the extent to which they influence public opinion and government policy.
- Analyze coverage of the war noting stories covered and not covered by news media.
- Deconstruct language used to describe the war.
- Describe how access to news sources determines news stories.

Leader Preparation:

- In *The Media: In War and Peace* read:
All the articles contained on pages 2 through 9.
- Watch the videotape *Lines in the Sand* through once. On your second viewing, look for the two sections of the videotape recommended below for showing to your group. Note the following four "cues" (places to start and stop the video when you show them).
 1. The beginning (first segment starts).
 2. About five minutes into the tape, the narrator says "Military planners learned their lesson from Vietnam — that modern wars are not won and lost on battlefields..." The ending visual for this section shows President Bush holding a camera out at arm's length and using it to take a picture of himself with a soldier. End of the first recommended section.
 3. Skip the next short section until you reach a visual of a white missile with "Hey Mom & Dad" written on it. Begin the second segment here, where the narrator says "Since Vietnam, the military has been studying techniques for marketing its story..."
 4. End the second segment when the narrator asks "...but victory at what price?"

Materials Needed:

- A VCR and TV monitor, with a remote control if possible.
- *Lines in the Sand* videotape, rewound to the beginning.
- Copies of the following handouts for all participants:
#1. *Assumptions About Vietnam: What We Remember*
#2. *Doublespeak*
#3. *How Access to News Sources Affects the News*
Optional: *The War's Boosters*
- Pens or pencils, paper and index cards for all participants.
- A large writing tablet and markers or blackboard and chalk for the leader.
- Tablet paper, markers and masking tape for small groups (as many as ten groups).

Required Time:

2 hours.

1. Introduction

(15 minutes)

A. State the goals of the session.

- To examine how daily routines were affected by media coverage of the Persian Gulf War in its first days.
- To evaluate the theory that the consequences of unrestricted press coverage during the Vietnam War justified the increased press restrictions of the Gulf War.
- To explore the relationship between the media and public opinion.
- To acquaint ourselves with how the media was controlled during the Gulf War.
- To identify and analyze the effect of euphemisms used to describe the war.
- To evaluate how access to news sources determines the stories we see.
- To decide on one action step each of us can accomplish before the next session.

B. State the purpose of the first activity.

To examine how daily routines were affected by media coverage of the Gulf War in its first days and to get to know other participants.

C. Describe the activity.

We will break up into pairs and describe our normal weekday routines, then exchange recollections of how they were affected during the first days of the Gulf War. Then, we will quickly describe our partner's routine to the rest of the group and how that routine was affected by the Gulf War.

D. Break up into pairs.

E. Partner reports.

Ask participants to describe their partner's normal routine and how it changed in the first days of the war. If your group is large (more than 15-20 people), you may wish to gather session participants into smaller groups of 6-8 for these reports.

2. Awareness

(15 minutes)

A. State the purpose of the first activity.

To evaluate the theory that the consequences of unrestricted press coverage during the Vietnam War justified the increased press restrictions of the Gulf War.

B. Describe the activity.

We will discuss the link between the lack of press restrictions during the Vietnam War and the outcome of the war itself.

C. Say something like this:

The role of the media in Vietnam is unique in history because it is the only recent war in which media censorship was basically unrestricted. Reporters could move freely throughout the country. A press code was observed, but most controls were *voluntary*. But the Vietnam War is unique for another important reason: The U.S. *lost*. The question still being debated is the relationship between these two facts. Did unrestricted coverage of the war sap public support? Or did coverage of the war become negative because the war was unwinnable and failed to serve U.S. interests? What do you think?

D. Pass out "Assumptions About Vietnam: What We Remember."

Important questions that will prepare your group for the first video segment:

- What media images do you remember from the time of the Vietnam War?
- How did those images affect your attitudes about the war?

For younger groups, who do not have firsthand memories of Vietnam, share your own memories of media images of Vietnam. Group leaders who themselves have no firsthand memories of the war may wish to refer to the many published histories or question older people about their recollections before the session.

Ask group members to read the handout, then discuss it briefly. Possible discussion question:

- What statement most surprised you? Why?

3. Analysis

(35 minutes)

- A. State the purpose of the next activity.** To explore the relationship between the media and public opinion.
- B. Describe the next activity.** We will watch a segment from the videotape, *Lines In The Sand*. While viewing, we will look for ways in which the film interprets the relationship between the media, public opinion and Vietnam.
- C. Give instructions for viewing the videotape.** Ask the group to listen for ways in which the videotape interprets the relationship between the media, public opinion and Vietnam. For example, suggest that participants look for and ponder the meaning of lines such as the following:
- "The Gulf War was a kind of national therapy session."
 - "Military planners learned their lesson from Vietnam — that modern wars are not won and lost on battlefields, but in front of television screens where attitudes and perceptions are bought and sold."
- D. Watch the videotape.** This videotape sequence ends with the narrator saying: "Military planners learned their lesson from Vietnam — that modern wars are not won and lost on battlefields..." Put the tape on "pause".
- E. Discussion.** Say something like this: "The videotape argues that 'military planners learned their lesson from Vietnam.'" The excerpts on the *Assumptions About Vietnam* handout suggest that the press's role in determining the result of the war was less significant.
- Possible discussion questions.**
- What role did the press play in Vietnam? Does the public lead the press or does the press lead the public?
 - How can the press support or damage a war effort?
 - What caused the change in public support indicated by the *Los Angeles Times* poll? Can the results of such polls be taken at face value? What questions can be raised about the accuracy of opinion polls?
 - What do you think the video producers mean when they call the Gulf War "a national therapy session?"
- F. State the purpose of the next activity.** To acquaint ourselves with media control during the Gulf War.
- G. Describe the activity.** We will watch the second segment of *Lines In The Sand*. As we watch, we will list ways in which we agree or disagree with the video's point of view.
- H. Watch the video segment.** If time allows you may also want to copy and distribute the optional *The War's Boosters* handout which provides several concrete examples of ways in which the press rallied to the war effort.
- I. Discussion.**
- Possible discussion questions:**
- How was control over the press exercised by the Pentagon?
 - What impact did Pentagon control over the press have on how the war was reported?
 - How might the public have responded if the press reports were not controlled by the Pentagon?
 - What are the potential consequences of portraying war as it was depicted during the Gulf War? (For example, impact on the public's willingness or reluctance to go to war, confidence in machines and technology, belief in "clean" wars, etc.)

J. State the purpose of the next activity.

To identify and analyze the effect of euphemisms used to describe the war.

K. Describe the activity.

We will match words in the left-hand column with words in the right-hand column on the handout *Doublespeak*.

L. Pass out the handout, "Doublespeak."

Ask participants to match the euphemisms in the left-hand column with their definitions in the right-hand column. Choose several word pairs and briefly discuss the different impressions left by the two expressions.

M. Wrap-up.

Ask participants if they remember other similar phrases. Participants may wish to add these to those listed on their handouts. Pass out pens or pencils if needed.

4. Reflection

(35 minutes)

A. State the purpose of the next activity.

To evaluate how access to news sources determines the reports we see.

B. Describe the activity.

We will break into citizen-reporter teams of about 4 people and choose a writer for each group. Each team of approximately 4 people will then use the information provided in one of three different news source scenarios to write a 50-75 word "headline opener" for the evening news.

C. Assign scenarios to teams.

Divide into reporter teams and assign scenarios. Depending on the size of the original group, more than one team may use the same scenario. Pass out paper and pens or pencils to each team. Pass out *How Access to News Sources Affects the News*. Allow 15 minutes for groups to read the information and write their story.

D. Ask each group to read its story to the larger group.

(5 minutes)

Do not take time to discuss each version until all groups have reported.

E. De-brief. List concerns and guidelines on board or tablet paper.

(15 minutes)

Possible discussion questions:

- How and why are the stories different?
- How and why are the stories similar? (A good time to talk about common assumptions of your group and of the media!)
- This activity was designed to mirror the kinds of pressures that reporters have on them *all the time* — not just during the Gulf War. In what ways do you think this activity illustrates the way news was created in the Gulf War situation? In other news situations?
- What concerns about the news gathering process does this raise for you? Why? List concerns on board or tablet paper.
- What constitutional or ethical guidelines affect your concerns? (For example, by including freedom of press in the Bill of Rights, diversity of viewpoints is guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.) List these guidelines next to concerns listed earlier.

5. Action

(15 minutes)

A. State the purpose of the final activity.

To decide on one action step each of us can accomplish before the next session.

B. Describe the activity.

We will each choose one of the concerns listed above, then gather with others who choose to work on the same question. Each group will brainstorm and list possible action steps that members can accomplish before the next session to address the concern its members selected—such as evaluating news reports, detecting bias, finding the hidden story.

C. Gather into groups of like concerns.

State the rules for brainstorming. See *Media Literacy for the '90s*, page 6–7. Encourage participants to think of action steps as personal, not merely political. For example, as a personal action, participants might seek out alternative news sources — see follow-up action idea #5, “Explore alternative news sources” on page 26. On a more active level, group members might write a letter to the editor or meet with managers at a local television station.

D. Pass out index cards and pens or pencils to everyone.

After brainstorming groups have listed several ideas, tape lists of possible activities on walls so that everyone can see them. Then ask participants to choose one action step to carry out before the next session and write their action steps down on an index card to remind themselves.

6. Evaluation and Closing

(10 minutes)

A. Evaluation

Get feedback for improving future sessions. (See the evaluation section in the *What You Need to Know to Lead Images of Conflict*.)

B. Possible Closing:

- Ask a few participants (or volunteers) to share what they will do before the next session, and remind group members that everyone will get a chance to discuss their action steps at the next session.
- Ask for any remaining questions.
- Thanks to participants.
- Preview next session, titled: “Us Against Them: How Stereotyping Creates Enemies.” Ask participants to begin to look for either/or viewpoints in news that tend to encourage simplistic understanding of issues.

The following is the key to the military jargon exercise in handout #2.

Laying Down a Carpet	Saturation Bombing
Friendly Fire	Shot by Mistake
Collateral Damage	Civilian Deaths
Smart Bomb Capabilities	A Bomb With Sophisticated Targeting
Sorties	Bombing Missions
Conventional Ordnance; Assets	Bombs
Desert Storm	A War
Human Remains Pouches	Body Bags

#1 ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT VIETNAM



IF THE MILITARY HAD BEEN CONTROLLING THE PRESS IN THE VIETNAM WAR...

Assumptions About Vietnam: What We Remember

U.S. civilian and military advisors began entering Vietnam in the 1950s. American involvement in the war ended in 1973. The war itself, however, did not end until 1975 when South Vietnam surrendered to the North. Over these two decades, 50,000 American and 2,000,000 Vietnamese lives were lost.

Few of these facts are remembered by the American public today. Instead what Americans recall are the powerful and horrifying images of the war that entered our homes via the nightly news and photo magazines like *Life*. While the facts faded in our memories, we recall the images as if we saw them yesterday.

Rarely-remembered facts about the media and Vietnam:

- #1 Television was very far from showing the "true horror of war" in Vietnam, although it wasn't military restrictions that limited what we saw. As a CBS directive said: "Shots can be selected that are not grisly, the purpose being not to avoid showing the ugly side of war, but rather to avoid offending families of war victims."
- #2 Television coverage did not become substantially more "sober" in Vietnam until the public, Washington officials and the soldiers in the field had already lost confidence that the war could be won.
- #3 Much of the public seems to assume that the media in Vietnam were a threat to military security. But this is incorrect. Voluntary guidelines for the protection of military information worked well. There were only a handful of violations of those guidelines during the entire war.
- #4 Officials sometimes complained of diplomatic damage done by press coverage in Vietnam. But there is little evidence that this was extensive. The bombing of Cambodia in 1969, for example, was kept secret [by the press] not to prevent opposition in the U.S., but because it was believed that the North Vietnamese would be more likely to protest if the bombing were officially acknowledged.

This information sheet is compiled from Daniel Hallin's article "Living Room Wars: Vietnam vs. the Gulf," pages 6-7 of *Media & Values* issue #56 *The Media: In War and Peace*, and his book *The "Uncensored War": The Media in Vietnam*, Oxford University Press, 1986.

#2 DOUBLE
SPEAK



How Jargon Turns Gore Into Glory

Doublespeak is not lying, nor is it merely sloppy language; it is the intentional use of euphemisms, synonyms, jargon and vagueness which pretends to communicate but really does not or implies the opposite of what it would appear to communicate.

—Metta Winter, *Christian Science Monitor*

The left-hand column below represents military jargon used during the Gulf War.
Draw a line to the correct definition in the righthand column.

Laying Down A Carpet

Friendly Fire

Collateral Damage

Smart Bomb Capabilities

Sorties

Conventional Ordnance; Assets

Desert Storm

Human Remains Pouches

Body Bags

Civilian Deaths

Shot by Mistake

A bomb with sophisticated targetting

Bombs

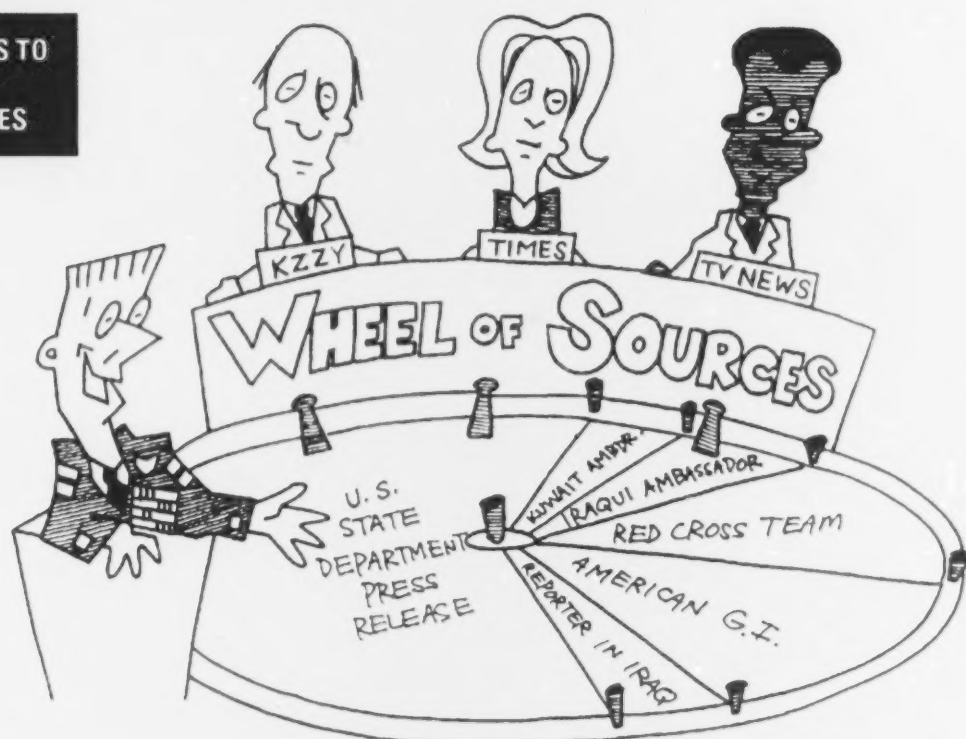
A War

Saturation Bombing

Bombing Missions

—Adopted with permission from *Media and the Gulf War: A Case Study* by the Association for Media Literacy, Toronto, Canada

#3 ACCESS TO NEWS SOURCES



How Access to News Sources Affects the News

Break into three reporter teams. Each team will receive a different scenario which restricts the number of sources you will be able to contact before you have to go to press. Write a news story based on available sources.

SCENARIO A

You're on a very tight deadline. The State Department issued a press release today. Use it.

SCENARIO B

Lucky you! You have one hour before you have to file your story. That will allow you to go to sources One, Two, and Three.

SCENARIO C

You have all day to work on the story. Go to all six sources. Then write your story.

SOURCE #1:

U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE.

February 5, 1991. Washington DC - At a press conference this morning, the President made the following remarks:

We're nearing the end of the third week of Operation Desert Storm — almost 21 days to the hour. And I'm pleased to report that we remain on course and on schedule.

U.S. and coalition forces continue to perform their assigned missions with great professionalism and, thankfully, with only modest casualties on our side. I'd like to emphasize that we're going to extraordinary, and, I would venture to say, unprecedented lengths to avoid damage to civilians and holy places.

We do not seek Iraq's destruction, nor do we seek to punish the Iraqi people for the decisions and policies of their leaders. In addition, we are doing everything possible—and with great success—to minimize collateral damage, despite the fact that Saddam is now relocating some military functions, such as command and control headquarters, in civilian areas such as schools.

I'd also emphasize that our goals have not changed. We continue to seek Iraq's full compliance with the 12 relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Our soldiers have performed with courage and bravery that should make all Americans proud. And I believe our country is giving them the support that they need and deserve. As we move into the fourth week of this conflict, I ask all Americans to continue their prayers for our valiant men and women in the Gulf.

And just let me end with this — that I have asked Dick Cheney, the Secretary of Defense, and General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to travel to Saudi Arabia late this week to meet directly with Commander in Chief US Central Command Norm Schwarzkopf and his staff. The purpose of this trip, which will be a short one, will be for them to get a firsthand status report. And I would then look forward to their returning here quickly and meeting with me and my other senior advisers.

SOURCE #2: INTERVIEW WITH THE KUWAITI AMBASSADOR IN EXILE.

(Excerpt from the transcript)

Ambassador: Kuwaitis love freedom and they will fight to the bitter end. Kuwaitis suffering has been great at the hand of the Iraqis. Sources within Kuwait inform me that Kuwaitis are being tortured and slaughtered. I spoke with President Bush and thanked him today for his support of my country.

SOURCE #3: UNITED NATIONS AMBASSADOR FROM IRAQ.

(Excerpt from the transcript)

The territory that Iraq entered is Iraqi territory. We have no plans to withdraw from our own land. The Americans and other allied forces are bombing many civilian targets within Baghdad. Many innocent Iraqis are being murdered.

SOURCE #4: INTERVIEW WITH AMERICAN G.I. CLEARED BY THE PENTAGON

(Excerpt from the transcript)

Soldier: We went up and let the bombs drop. We've been pretty successful so far. I sure hope this is over soon but we're prepared to do whatever is necessary.

SOURCE #5: REPORT FILED BY AMERICAN REPORTER IN IRAQ. CLEARED BY IRAQ.

(Excerpt from the transcript)

American reporter: Life goes on in Baghdad. We heard air raid signals during the night but this morning cars line the streets. Shops are open. Iraqi radio reports that they have fired additional Scuds at Israel, and that their military forces are moving deeper into Kuwait.

SOURCE #6: RED CROSS TEAM INSIDE IRAQ. UNCENSORED.

(Excerpt from the transcript)

Red Cross Official: Bombing appears to be indiscriminate. Life has come to a virtual standstill. Little electricity or phone lines appear to be operating. Few health facilities can take patients and those that do are terribly over-burdened. Immediate relief is necessary or thousands will die of starvation and lack of medical treatment.

OPTIONAL: THE WAR'S BOOSTERS



The War's Boosters

According to a Los Angeles Times poll on January 15, 1991 Americans were split 50-50 whether to go to war or continue economic sanctions. By January 20, 1991, Americans had rallied 80% in support of going to war.

The morning after the U.S. began the bombing of Iraq, NBC's Robert Bazell reported the Pentagon's assessment via the *Today* show: "It was spectacular news," Bazell summarized. "We've lost only one casualty."

Other networks were similarly ecstatic. CBS' Charles Osgood (1/17/91) described the early bombing of Iraq as "a marvel", while the same network's Jim Stewart (1/17/91) spoke of "two days of almost picture-perfect assaults".

The war ended on the same note of enthusiastic cheerleading from the media, with CBS' Dan Rather (2/27/91) pumping a general's hand after an interview and gushing, "Congratulations on a job wonderfully done!"

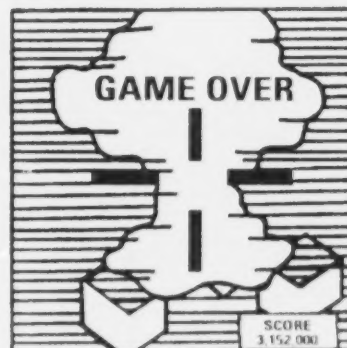
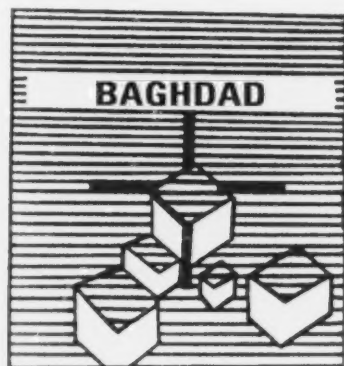
The euphoria at the beginning and the end of the Persian Gulf War brackets one of the most disturbing episodes in U.S. journalistic history—a period when many reporters for national media abandoned any pretense of neutrality or reportorial distance in favor of boosterism for the war effort.

Some TV journalists did not need to be coerced into abandoning the appearance of independence, but accepted the task of guiding public opinion in favor of the war as their natural role. In discussing the prospect of increased casualties, Jim Lehrer (1/23/91) presented the government and the media as an information team: "Have officials and the press prepared the American people for what may happen next?" NBC's Tom Brokaw (1/22/91) was skeptical of the idea that reporters have a right (let alone a duty) to cover the return of dead U.S. service people: "Do you think that's in the best interest of the U.S.?" he asked.

The use by journalists of "we" to mean U.S. military forces was constant, so that one seemed to hear of CBS taking out half the Iraqi air force, Saddam Hussein targeting NBC's command control center, even Walter Cronkite manning Patriots: "We knocked one of their Scuds out of the sky," (1/17/91). As Christopher Hitchens put it describing the limited range of debate on U.S. network television (C-Span, 2/4/91), "If you can't, in discussing something like this war, use the word 'we' for everything that's done, as if we are one and we're all agreed... you really aren't in the discussion at all."

—Excerpted with permission from *Extra!* May 1991. Written by Jim Naureckas.

Images of Conflict



Us Against Them: How the Media Create Enemies

Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify techniques used to "demonize" opponents.
- Explain ways in which media polarize conflict.
- List several alternative strategies for information-gathering in response to news media.

Leader Preparation:

- In *The Media: In War and Peace* read:
Why Peace Isn't Covered, page 18.
How Media Sell Images of the Enemy, pages 21-22.
- Keep track of local conflicts that might make good news stories for groups to examine as citizen reporters (see Reflection section). Prepare a list of possible story ideas.
- Several days before the workshop, begin recording local news broadcasts. Watch recorded broadcasts to see whether they include stories in which racial, sexual, or economic conflict is polarized.

Materials Needed:

- A VCR and TV monitor, with a remote control if possible.
- Copies of the following handouts for all participants:
#4, *How Media Sells Images of the Enemy*
#5, *Citizen Reporters' Worksheet*
- Videotape of a local news program cued to a segment that discusses an issue that involves conflict, e.g., racial conflict, a struggle between an environmental group and government or corporation, between an individual and a social service agency.
- Pens or pencils and paper for all participants.
- A large writing tablet and markers or blackboard and chalk for the leader.
- Large tablet paper and markers for each group of 4 to 6.

Required Time:

1 1/2 to 2 hours.

1. Introduction

(10 minutes)

A. Ask participants for reports on their action steps.

- What did you do? What impact did it have on you or others?
- What might you do differently next time?

B. State the goals of the session.

- To explore how "enemies" are constructed through media images.
- To identify techniques used to describe enemies.
- To analyze the media's polarization of conflict in non-war contexts.
- To consider how news media and citizens might portray conflict in ways that encourage constructive solutions to the conflicts presented.
- To commit to one action step that will encourage the kind of information-gathering that can help resolve a community problem.

2. Awareness

(40 minutes)

A. State the purpose of the first activity.

To explore how "enemies" are constructed by the media.

B. Describe the activity.

We will list examples of enemies or "bad guys," then list some of their common characteristics and discuss what these enemies have in common.

C. List enemies or bad guys.

Ask participants to think of an "enemy" or "bad guy". Write participants' examples on a blackboard or large tablet paper. You might prompt participants with The Joker, Scarface, Darth Vader, Khomeini, Idi Amin, Saddam Hussein.

D. Discussion. Possible discussion questions.

- What words would you use to describe these characters?
- What do these "enemies" look like?
- What physical characteristics do they have in common?
- Any other common characteristics? (for example, do they speak with an accent? Are they "foreigners"?)

E. State the purpose of the next activity.

To identify techniques used to describe enemies.

F. Describe the activity.

We will break into groups of 4 to 6. Each group will focus on one newspaper story reprinted on the handout, *How Media Sells Images of the Enemy*. Then we will choose a group reporter to tell the larger group what we discovered.

G. Divide into groups of 4 to 6.

Pass out the handout *How Media Sells Images of the Enemy*. Assign various groups to review the newspaper stories reprinted and ask them to identify:

- Ways the story describes the conflict in stark terms of good and evil.
- How the story characterizes the opposition. (These two bulleted points are also listed at the top of the handout.)

H. Group reports.

Ask group reporters to present their groups' findings.

I. Discussion. Possible discussion questions.

- Why do you think descriptions of "real" enemies are often similar to descriptions of fictional enemies like Darth Vader?
- Why do you think newspapers and other media tend to portray conflict in stark terms of good versus evil? In what ways is the world really like/unlike this black and white picture?

- What other issues besides war can you think of that portray obvious conflict between two strongly different, opposing sides? (For example: abortion, the Hill-Thomas hearings, gender issues in general, racial issues.)
- You may want to read paragraph two, third column from the article *The More We Watched The Less We Knew* on page 2 of *The Media: In War and Peace* and ask for responses. The paragraph begins "Race riots, urban conflicts, even political campaigns...."

3. Analysis

(30 minutes)

- A. State the purpose of the next activity.** To analyze the media's polarization of conflict in non-war contexts.
- B. Describe the next activity.** We will watch a short news story from a local news broadcast, looking for ways the story polarizes the conflicts it portrays into stark "us versus them" or "them versus them" terms.
- C. Watch the videotape.** Pass out pens or pencils and paper to all participants. As you watch the videotape, have participants note what they think are examples of "us versus them" or "them versus them" reporting.
- D. Discussion.**
- Possible discussion questions and ideas.*
- What are the two (or more) sides in the conflict? Re-screen portions of the news story if necessary.
 - How are enemies constructed in this story?
 - How do the strategies used to polarize conflict during wartime resemble or differ from those used in this news story?
 - Who are the story's sources? How do these sources affect the way the story is reported?
 - What experiences have you had that illustrate "us versus them" or "them versus them" reporting?

4. Reflection

(25 minutes)

- A. State the purpose of the next activity.** To consider how news media and citizens might portray conflict in ways that encourage constructive conflict resolution.
- B. Describe the next activity.**
- In teams of 4 to 6, we will become "citizen reporters," first choosing a local story like the one we've been discussing. Then we will write down on tablet paper a plan for reporting the story so that a constructive solution is encouraged. Finally, we will present our plan to the entire group.
- Using your prepared list of local conflicts, you may want to suggest local conflicts to the group and let participants divide into groups according to which conflict they wish to address.
- C. Divide into groups of 4 to 6.** Pass out the handout *Citizen Reporters' Worksheet* and give large-size tablet paper and markers to all groups. Visit groups, assisting them in developing strategies. If groups seem stuck, encourage them to focus on steps one and two. Steps three and four may be difficult unless groups have actually tried out some of the investigative ideas in steps one and two.
- D. Group reports.** Ask one person in each small group to describe:
- Their group's story or problem.
 - Are there additional sides to the story that haven't been covered previously? What would they do first to gather more information? Can they think of strategies for avoiding combative portrayal of the conflict (labor against management when the problem may be lack of

jobs in the community, loggers against environmentalists instead of looking at ways to preserve the forest)?

- Who would have to be interviewed or involved? Why?
- Where would you go for further fact-finding?

Then ask the group to tape their plan(s) to the wall so that everyone can see it. One or more of these plans will be used in the next activity.

E. De-brief.

Possible questions for debriefing.

- What do you think would happen if community groups (like yours) sent out their own citizen reporter teams to gather information about local problems? How would the information gathered be different from that seen on TV?
- Why do you suppose the information gathered by a community group might be different from the information presented on a local TV news program?
- Why don't community groups do this kind of information-gathering more often? Or, describe a time when a community group you are part of did this kind of information-gathering. What was the result?

Complete these statements on the board or tablet paper.

- In order to encourage solutions to local problems, local news media have a responsibility to...
- And community organizations (like ourselves) have a responsibility to...

5. Action

(15 minutes)

A. State the purpose of the final activity.

To commit to one action step that will encourage information-gathering that can help resolve community problems.

B. Describe the activity.

We will choose one of the local conflicts for which we developed a citizen reporter plan, then we will choose one or two of the activities from the plan to "try out."

C. Choose one of the plans/conflicts posted.

If the group cannot decide between two or three plans, divide into several smaller groups, each addressing different issues.

D. Ask participants to choose one activity to "try out."

Encourage multiple levels of involvement from participants:

- Some may wish to interview a person they've seen in a news story to find out if what they saw on TV matches what the interviewee said.
- Others may wish to follow-up with the interviewer to see what happens in a "citizen interview."
- Still others may wish to begin implementation of a "citizen-reporter team."

Ask several participants to share activities they will "try out." If others seem interested in particular activities, have participants exchange phone numbers and report to each other about their activities. Your group may also want to plan a future get-together to share learnings.

6. Evaluation and Closing

(5-10 minutes)

A. Evaluation

Get feedback for improving future sessions. (See the evaluation section.)

B. Possible Closing:

- Ask for any remaining questions.
- Thanks to participants.
- Announce future meetings or gatherings.

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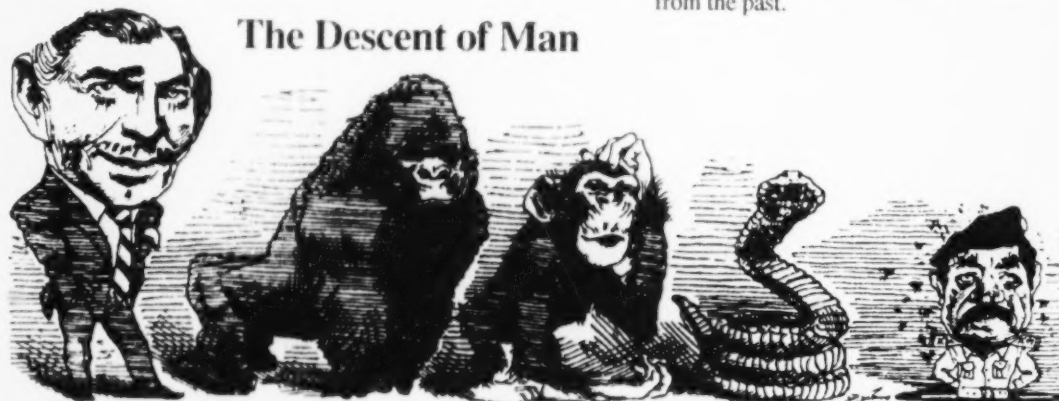
How Media Sells Images of the Enemy

Look carefully at the face of the enemy. The lips are curled downward. The eyes are fanatical and far away. The flesh is contorted and molded into the shape of monster or beast. Nothing suggests this man ever laughs, is torn by doubts, or shaken by tears. He feels no tenderness or pain. Clearly he is unlike us. We need have no sympathy, no guilt, when we destroy him.

—Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy*

The following excerpts illustrate some of the most common ways that we dehumanize each other, positioning ourselves as allies of God, peace and truth, and our enemies as allies of Satan, chaos and deception. As you read these articles, mark or highlight words, adjectives, references or other techniques that:

- Simplify the conflict into one of good versus evil.
- Depict the enemy as so horrible or unreasonable that the use of force seems necessary and justified.
- Align the enemy with Satan or other evil characters from the past.



David Levine. Copyright © 1991 The New York Times Company. Reprinted by permission.

Gulf Signs Hint Peace Possible

By Johanna Neumann
USA TODAY, p. 1A
Dec 31, 1991-Jan. 1, 1991

A diplomatic solution to the Persian Gulf crisis may be found before war begins, congressional leaders said Sunday. "My gut tells me that there will be a resolution without firing a shot," said Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole, R-Kan. Dole and Democrats said the White House should redouble its diplomatic efforts.

But Iraq's President Saddam Hussein—facing a Jan. 15 U.N. deadline to withdraw from Kuwait—blasted President Bush and Saudi King Fahd for having foreign troops on Muslim soil.

"In this confrontation those who betrayed the teachings of Jesus Christ have been trapped by the devil—may God curse them all," he said, calling Bush a "Judas" and Fahd a "traitor of the two holy mosques."

Bush told Time magazine he too has a "gut feeling" Iraq will surrender—prompting Iraqi Information Minister Latif Jassim to suggest Sunday that Bush "must have been drunk."

"If Bush starts a war, he will not be able to stop it," Jassim added. "We will show the world that America is a paper tiger. You will see how the Americans will kneel down."

Iraq said Sunday that Muslim delegates from 17 countries will attend a three-day conference in Baghdad Jan. 9 to defy the U.N. ultimatum.

But Rep. Lee Hamilton, D-Ind., told CBS's Face the Nation there are some signs that "indicate a diplomatic solution may work." He cited fresh appeals by Germany's foreign minister for a new diplomatic solution.

And House Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin, D-Wis., said Saddam has "a history of doing a 180-degree turns... when he comes up against a stone wall."

Violence a Way of Life for Iraqi Leader

By John Omicinski
USA TODAY, p. 2A
Thursday, Jan. 17, 1991

As a young man Saddam Hussein was a chillingly creative professional assassin. The Iraqi president has never flinched at violence.

Saddam, an orphan, learned violence under the tutelage of an uncle who took part in a World War II pro-Nazi coup that failed. His official biography says that at 7 he carried a pistol to school. By age 20, he had killed a foe of his uncle.

By 1959, at 22, he was a profes-

sional, chosen by the Ba'ath party as one of a 10-man hit squad to kill dictator Gen. Abdel Karim Kassam. The plot failed, but it helped write Saddam's legend. His story was that he escaped, dug a bullet out of his leg with a knife, then rode a donkey 300 miles to Syria.

In 1969, Saddam won a long-sought law degree. He showed up for exams with a revolver in his belt and four armed guards.

Besides ordering the deaths of thousands, including a brother-in-law who died

in a helicopter crash officially blamed on a sandstorm, he reportedly has pulled the trigger himself.

He is said to have discussed battle-field losses with a general, then ordered him into the next room and killed him. There are reports the same fate befell a cabinet minister who suggested Saddam step aside during the Iran-Iraq war. His dismembered body later was shipped to his family.

Remarks in Congress During the Debate Over Military Action in Iraq

Rep. Robert H. Michael
Republican of Illinois
New York Times
International, p. A8
Friday, January 11, 1991

I speak from the prejudice of being a combat veteran of World War II. And those of our generation know from bloody experience that unchecked aggression against a small nation is a prelude to an international disaster.

Saddam Hussein today has more planes and tanks and, frankly, men under arms, than Hitler had at the time when Prime Minister Chamberlain came back from Munich with that miserable piece of paper—peace in our time. I'll never forget that replay of that movie in my life.

And I have an obligation, I guess, coming from that generation, to transmit those thoughts I had at the time to the younger generation who didn't experience what we did. Saddam Hussein not only invaded Kuwait, he occupied, terrorized, murdered civilians, systematically looted and turned a peaceful nation into a wasteland of horror. He seeks control over one of the world's vital resources,

and he ultimately seeks to make himself the unchallenged anti-Western dictator of the Mideast.

Either we stop him now, and stop him permanently, or we won't stop him at all.

Senator Alfonse M. D'Amato
Republican of New York
New York Times
International, p. A10
Sunday, Jan. 13, 1991

Mr. President, Saddam Hussein is like a glutton, a geo-political glutton. He's sitting down at the banquet table overflowing with goodies. And let me tell you, like every glutton, he's going to have them all. Kuwait is just the appetizer. He's gobbling it up. But it's not going to satisfy him. After a noisy belch or two, he's going to reach across the table for the next morsel. Now what's it going to be—Saudi Arabia? Could be. The U.A.E. (United Arab Emirate)? Who knows? I don't.

Possible Discussion Questions and Ideas

1. Compare the words and techniques that you noticed when reading the above articles to those found by others. Explain why yours or other's ideas differ.
2. What other examples of dehumanizing the enemy do you remember—either from the Gulf War or other wars?
3. Rewrite one of the articles (or one or two paragraphs) from the opposite perspective. Which version is closer to the truth? How might you discover which is closer to the truth?
4. The U.S. media and government accused Saddam Hussein of many crimes. Of what similar crimes might an Iraqi or other group legitimately accuse President Bush?

**#5 CITIZEN
REPORTERS'
WORKSHEET**



Citizen Reporters' Worksheet

State the problem (in one sentence, if possible):

Short description of how the story has been reported in the news:

- 1. Awareness:** How are we going to convince the public (and ourselves) of the importance of the problem? Describe a field trip or people you would interview:

- 2. Analysis:** Who else must be interviewed or otherwise involved?
What other sites must we visit to fact-find or see "for ourselves?"

- 3. Reflection:** In your opinion as a group, how should the problem be solved and why?

- 4. Action:** What is the first step we might take to encourage this solution?

Evaluation



In order to make future media education sessions more effective and responsive to your needs, please take a few minutes to fill out the following evaluation thoughtfully and with candor.

Beside each statement below, write the number that best reflects your evaluation of the session (5 is best, 1 is worst). For each item you rate 3, 2, or 1, please write a two or three word explanation next to the statement.

Strongly Disagree (worst)	Strongly Agree (best)
1 ←	→ 5

- _____ 1. From the beginning of today's session, I understood the purpose of the session.
- _____ 2. The structure and flow of today's session was logical and well-designed.
- _____ 3. Each activity was relevant to the topic.
- _____ 4. I gained useful knowledge that I can use immediately.
- _____ 5. I will watch, read, or listen to media differently because of today's session.
- _____ 6. The leader facilitated group interaction in a way that enhanced the group's learning.
- _____ 7. The leader thought my input was important.
- _____ 8. It was easy to interrupt and ask questions without disrupting the flow of the session.
- _____ 9. When the leader suggested discussion questions, I wanted to share my ideas.
- _____ 10. There was a balance of instruction and group sharing.
- _____ 11. Handouts were adequate and helpful.
- _____ 12. The leader adjusted/adapted the session to match the make-up of the group.
- _____ 13. My expectations for the session were met.

What is your overall opinion of today's session? (circle one)

Excellent Good Fair Mediocre Poor

Please answer the following questions briefly:

What was your favorite part of today's session?

What are you aware of now that you were not aware of before today's session?

What action do you see yourself taking as a result of today's session?

What could have been included that would have made today's session more relevant to you?

What did other participants think of today's session?

Additional comments:

This evaluation let me express my feelings about the session effectively (circle one):

Yes

No

(please explain why)

Circle other topics that you'd like to see dealt with similarly in future sessions with your group:

Sexism in the media

Racism in the media

How to watch the news

Media and the environment

Media and children

Media and addiction

Write in your own:

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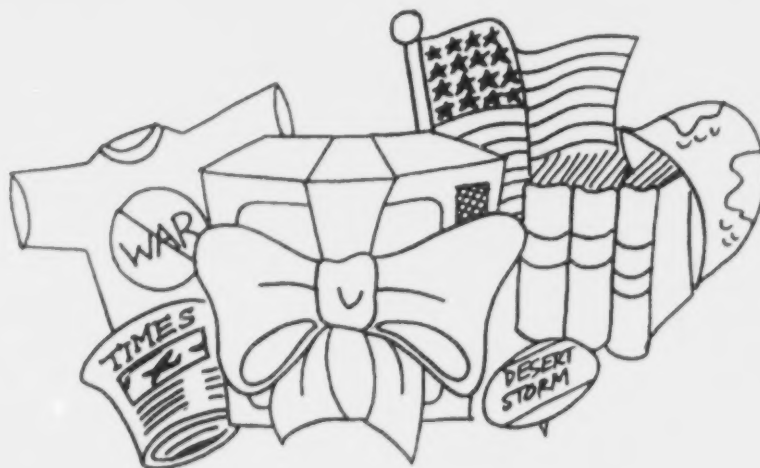
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Follow-up Sessions, Resources, Action Ideas

Images of Conflict



1. Look for "found resources" to expand your group's exploration of the workshop themes.

In preparing for the workshop sessions, create a collection/display of buttons, T-shirts, posters, memorabilia, yellow ribbons, special issues of magazines and newspapers, etc. that you or friends may have saved. Use these to decorate your meeting room and to remind your group of how the Gulf War became "popular culture." Some of the following may be available from members of the group or through your local library:

- Popular videotapes produced about the war can help remind us of the many media images that bombarded us during the war. Look for *Desert Storm Rising*, *Desert Shield* and CNN's *Desert Storm: The War Begins* at your video store. Play one of them without sound as your group gathers for the first session.
- *War in the Gulf*, a "coffee table" book by Turner Publishing retells the story of the war (and coverage by Cable News Network) in glossy photos, charts and reports. The book recalls the power of images in shaping public perception — and policy. Turn exemplary photos into 4-color overheads to accompany your discussions and activities. (Also available through Turner Educational Services, Inc., One CNN Center, Box 105366, Atlanta, GA 30348-5366; \$29.95.)
- *Faces of The Enemy*, philosopher Sam Keen's investigation of the hostile imagination, is available as a book and as a 60-minute video which originally aired on PBS. Although activities used in Session Two are built on Keen's ideas, the original book and video may be useful for your reference. (Ordering information on page 23 of *The Media: In War and Peace*.)
- *How The War Was Won*, General Norman Schwarzkopf's video of his final briefing explaining how the Allied forces won the war is an excellent opportunity to observe the Pentagon's public relations techniques in action. Play a short section and ask group participants to notice the care with which the visual and oral presentation was developed and delivered. (Available for sale or rent in most video stores.)
- *Desert Storm: The War in the Persian Gulf* is a state-of-the-art resource on a CD-ROM videodisc created for the Macintosh. It retells the war in video segments, still photos, text documents and audio utilizing reports from *Time* magazine and other Time-Warner sources. (\$39.99 from Bureau of Electronic Publishing, (800)828-4766 or EduCorp, (800)828-4766.)
- *Newsweek* and *Time* magazines ran major stories each week before and during the war. Create a bulletin board of articles from the early weeks of the war to chronicle how the mainstream media's attitude toward the war changed week by week.

- Bill Moyers' excellent *Special Report: After the War* aired on PBS to critical acclaim. If it is not available in your public library, suggest that it be ordered or have your group contribute it as a gift. Check your local high school library, too. (Order information on p. 23 of *The Media: In War and Peace*.)

2. Expand your workshop with additional activities on related themes.

Find additional group activities in articles and "Re:Action" boxes throughout *The Media: In War and Peace*.

- p. 12 — *Getting a Handle on Military Advertising* provides a process for exploring how the military sells itself as a career to young people. Ideal for high school or youth groups.
- p. 20 — *A Look at War Film Images* gives a list of popular films/videos that deal with war themes and a set of excellent questions for analysis. Keep these questions handy for analyzing new feature films as well as TV mini-series and specials. (Refer to *A Note About Videotape Copyright Restrictions in Media Literacy for the 90's* (p. 7) for copyright restrictions on using videos in a group setting.)
- p. 7 — *Media Images Pitch War For Profit*, an article by Ronald K.L. Collins, illustrates how current events are commercialized for profit. Using the article as a springboard, organize a discussion around other events that are being similarly manipulated.
- p. 13 — Read aloud this excerpt from Kurt Vonnegut's stunning novel, *Slaughterhouse Five*, in a liturgy or as a reflection piece on war and its destruction. Or select a member of the group with dramatic training to prepare it for an opening or closing ritual.

3. Explore the impact of war on children.

As a follow-up session, invite group members to organize an event for children about issues of war and peace. Several good background resources can be found on page 23 of *The Media: In War and Peace*, including a 30-minute PBS video, *Kids Ask About War*. Suggestions for alternatives to war toys and war play can be found in *Who's Calling the Shots?* Also check with your local children's librarian for new resources as they become available.

- The Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age has a 12-minute videotape and study guide on *The World is a Dangerous Place: Images of the Enemy on Children's Television*. (\$40. To order, call 617-493-1550.)

4. Start a media bulletin board.

If your group meets regularly in a school, church, community center, or library, establish a Media Bulletin Board in your meeting room or a well-traveled hallway. Materials generated during the workshops can be displayed, as well as magazine and newspaper articles, announcements, cartoons, and other items of interest that participants find. A Media Bulletin Board provides an on-going forum for your group to exchange ideas beyond the workshops. It can also generate interest in media literacy issues and raise awareness among people who have not been able to attend.

5. Explore alternative news sources.

Encourage your group to look for alternative news sources at your newsstand and library. These publications offer different perspectives on domestic and foreign policy issues, and can help you get the information you need to know what's really going on. Readers interested in progressive politics will find *Mother Jones*, *In These Times* and *The Nation* of interest. For commentary, try *Tikkun*, a Jewish critique of politics, culture, and society, *New Perspectives Quarterly* or *Zeta* magazine. Conservatives will find *Conservative Digest* of interest, while environmentalists will enjoy *Earth Island Journal* and *Whole Earth Review*. Consider trade union papers, feminist or ethnic journals or publications from other countries. If there are specific publications you want that are not available, ask your library or newsstand to carry them.

- Or start an alternative news co-op in your school, women's or men's group, church or

synagogue, senior citizen group or even just in your neighborhood or apartment house. Make a list of news periodicals or opinion journals each member of the co-op already subscribes to. Create a common place or time to put them out for others to share. Consider new periodicals that one or other member could add to the collection. (Great idea for holiday or birthday gifts!) Strive for a variety of viewpoints and alternative publications that provide news and opinion not found in mainstream media.

6. Establish a monitoring group.

One effective way to systematically gather information about news coverage in your locality is to set up a Monitoring Group. Data gathered through monitoring groups can be powerful ammunition when approaching editors and producers with requests for change. You might begin by watching sports events and keeping track of military recruitment ads.

Or set aside one week when members of your group agree to watch every nightly newscast noting whether and how an issue of concern was covered. Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (F.A.I.R.) conducts similar national surveys and can be a resource for information on bias in reporting. (F.A.I.R., 130 West 25th Street, New York, NY 10001, 212 633-6700.)

7. Publicize the results of your workshop sessions.

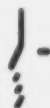
Let others in the community know what you're learning! Let other groups know about *Images of Conflict* and how they can hold workshops for their members.

- Ask writers in your group to contact local newspaper and magazine editors to see if they are interested in summary articles of tips and ideas that the group developed. Submit these articles to community organizations for their newsletters. Prepare short items for workplace, church or synagogue bulletins.
- Radio talk shows often cover the subject of television. Call to share ideas you learned in the workshop. Articulate members of the group might be placed as guests. They could also appear at other community events, such as Rotary club breakfasts or senior citizen luncheons.
- Invite your local newspaper or television station to send a reporter to interview participants and do a story on the workshop program. Emphasize the positive nature of the workshop and specific actions that resulted. Don't be shy. Call news editors and reporters several times if need be. Try to reach busy reporters first thing in the morning. Keep an eye out for reporters you think might be interested in media literacy issues.

And don't forget — send copies of your articles or news of your workshop to the Center for Media and Values. We're eager to know what you learned and who attended.

**Use This
Page For
Your Own
Notes or
Other Ideas**

**Images
of Conflict**

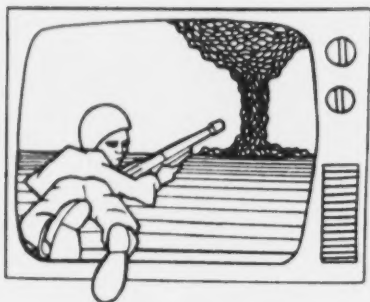


CENTER FOR MEDIA AND VALUES

Other Media Literacy Workshop Kits™ Available

- ***Break the Lies that Bind*** is a six-session workshop kit exploring how advertising and media teach us to be males and females, and influence our perceptions of beauty and body image. Especially good for teens and their parents. \$21.95.
- ***Parenting in a TV Age*** contains four sessions to help parent groups explore issues of children and television. Includes five important ideas to teach kids about TV. \$21.95.
- ***Selling Addiction*** provides two sessions to uncover the myths behind cigarette and alcohol ads, and specifically how advertisers target children and teens, especially females and minorities. \$34.95 / with video. (Available February, 1992.)
- ***News for the '90s*** contains three sessions on how to analyze the news and the power of images to shape our opinions and attitudes. \$17.95.

Order all of the above from the Center for Media and Values, 1962 S. Shenandoah, Los Angeles, CA 90034. Or call 310/559-2944 for Visa and MasterCard orders over \$10. Annual membership in the Center (\$30/personal; \$75/organizational) entitles you to a 10% discount on all Center resources.



IMAGES OF CONFLICT

Learning From Media Coverage of the Gulf War

A Media Literacy Workshop Kit™

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- Ideal for adult and youth education, community programs, churches and synagogues.
- A positive, creative approach that can really make a difference!

WHY SHOULD YOU CONSIDER THIS WORKSHOP KIT?

The drama of the Persian Gulf War had many battles, including an ongoing one with the media. At the same time, instantaneous global coverage demonstrated television's power as a political player. No longer can any of us deny the impact and influence of the media on the world stage and in our own lives. This Kit is an entry point for exploring the issues that face us as citizens in the media age.

Through group activities, reading, dialogue, videos and reflective exercises, *Images of Conflict* sheds light on how the news media shape public opinion—not just during the Persian Gulf War but in other crisis events as well: racial incidents, urban conflicts, even political campaigns.

Images of Conflict provides a step-by-step process using video and print resources to help groups learn to analyze the media. In two (or more) informative and lively sessions, you'll explore and identify:

- reporting techniques that contribute to conflict;
- how words and images create "enemies;"
- how doublespeak masks the horrors of war;
- why peace isn't covered;
- why the more we watch, the less we know.

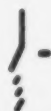
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1. Step-by-step leader's guide for each of two sessions, which can be explored individually or as a series, 90-120 minutes each. Includes illustrated handouts with license to reprint.
2. *Lines in the Sand*. A 12-minute video essay that includes rare, unbroadcast footage of Iraq following the Persian Gulf War.
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WHO PREPARED THIS WORKSHOP KIT?

The Center for Media and Values is a nonprofit membership organization pioneering a *new way of thinking* about TV and media and *new resources for analyzing* and actively critiquing the media's influence in our daily lives. Our goal is to create more knowledgeable, more selective, more media-wise readers, listeners and viewers.

Media Literacy Workshop Kits™ grew out of the widely-acclaimed *Media & Values* magazine. Other Kits are also available and more are in development. We welcome your membership.



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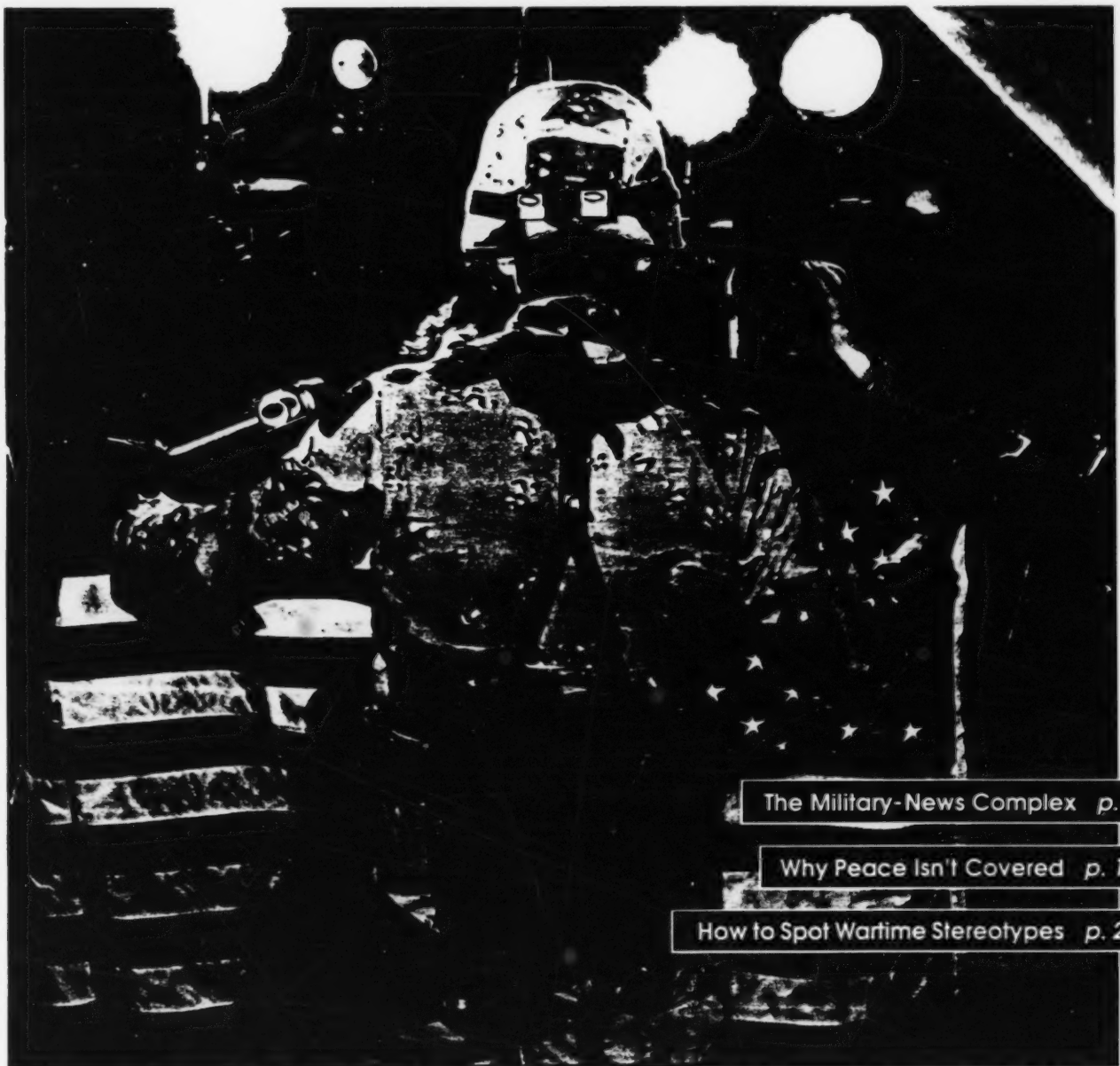
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*T*HE MEDIA: *In War and Peace*



The Military-News Complex p. 3

Why Peace Isn't Covered p. 18

How to Spot Wartime Stereotypes p. 21

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In addition to publishing *Media&Values*, the Center creates educational curriculum materials for local use, organizes forums and conferences, and maintains an information and resource center on the media issues of our time. Funding for the Center comes from subscriptions and memberships along with individual donations, foundation grants and organizational co-sponsorships.

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Cover Photo by Kirk Condyles/Impact Visuals.

THE MORE WE WATCHED

The Less We Knew

By Rosalind Silver

What would happen if they held a war and nobody watched?

As *Media&Values* staff members joined the millions of TV watchers glued to their television sets in January, we began asking ourselves that question. As the hours of televised bombardments, Scud missile attacks and, ultimately, victory parades wound on, we became more and more aware of the media's role in forming not just issues of war and peace, but our view of them.

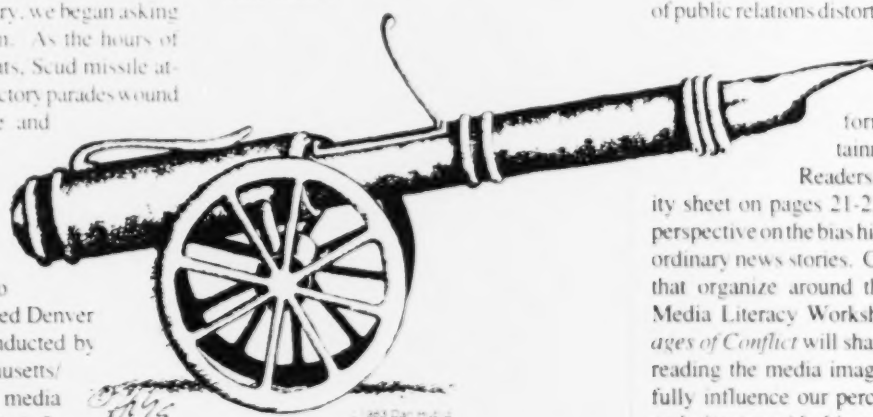
In fact, according to the responses of selected Denver residents to a poll conducted by University of Massachusetts/Amherst researchers, media usage played a big role in influencing wartime opinions. Researchers found that heavy TV watchers were more likely to support the war. They were also *less* (not more) likely to be well informed about its causes and consequences. Put simply, researchers concluded that the more TV people watched, the less they knew.

Throughout this issue, a number of knowledgeable people voice various opinions about the media's role in this and all wars. But the war is over. Why are we talking about it now, months later?

Because, unfortunately, conflict hasn't disappeared from the world with the cease-fire. And, understanding of the media's role as a player in world events becomes more and more crucial as we face the post-Cold War world.

On the surface, this issue is about the Persian Gulf War. It questions many aspects of the news and media coverage of that conflict, including:

- governmental use of public relations techniques to mold public opinion;
- media submission to the allure of flashy technology while ignoring its impact on humankind;



- the stifling of alternative views resulting from limited or unbalanced coverage by critics of the war;
- dehumanization and demonization of a stereotyped enemy.

Still, Gulf War TV coverage provided

has turned the job of creating enemies over to the media. But this process isn't limited to war.

Race riots, urban conflicts, even political campaigns, provide day-to-day examples of public relations distortion and stereotyping that polarize society in the guise of information or entertainment.

Readers who use the activity sheet on pages 21-22 will gain a new perspective on the bias hidden in seemingly ordinary news stories. Groups and classes that organize around the accompanying Media Literacy Workshop Kit™ on *Images of Conflict* will sharpen their skills in reading the media images that so powerfully influence our perceptions. Readers and viewers with this understanding have taken a crucial step toward demanding more of their media, whether broadcast or print.

Of course, genuine problems and conflicts will continue to exist in the world. The ability to distinguish between reality and media distortions will not eliminate them, but it can help us recognize them when we see them. Only then might we find that somebody has taken a poll with a startling conclusion: The more television viewers watched, the more they knew.

Researchers found that heavy TV watchers were more likely to support the war. They were also less likely to be well informed about its causes and consequences.

one of the best examples yet of the misleading selectivity of instant satellite feeds and the ability of authorities (in this case the military) to command a platform. But the view from the platform is the real problem.

What lessons, then, can we learn from this issue? As author and philosopher Sam Keen points out on page 18, negative images fabricating a distorted view of an enemy make belligerence possible. For decades, the development of propaganda

Rosalind Silver is editor of *Media&Values*. The research study noted in this article from the University of Massachusetts is *The Gulf War: A Study of the Media, Public Opinion and Public Knowledge* by Justin Lewis, Sut Jhally and Michael Morgan.

Dan Hibig is a free-lance illustrator and art director for the Oakland Tribune. Copyright 1984. Reprinted with permission.

THE MILITARY-NEWS COMPLEX:

What Determines What We Really See and Hear?

By William F. Fore

Students of television have identified more than one way of viewing its role as a cultural force. Recognition of the meanings it transmits, the way its programming is driven by economic considerations and its role in gratifying audience needs all provide important tools for analyzing its role in shaping societal goals and values. This applies even more effectively when attitudes are being shaped for a major societal effort such as a war.

When we apply these three analytical methods to TV images of the Gulf War, some important insights into television's biases and cultural power emerge.

TV as Signifier

TV viewers have already learned a complex visual code in which a closeup means intimacy or emotion, a shot from below means authority, a fadeout means the end of an episode. We have been taught the "meaning" of certain characters and ob-

jects: doctors represent authority; jet planes mean wealth and power, popular actors and athletes are trustworthy. Commercials rely heavily on significant images that link soft drinks with youth and beauty, automobiles with power, control and escape. Signification is the key to all effective selling.

What did the Gulf War sell? We were inundated with images of technology: powerful and exotic airplanes taking to the sky night after night, tanks speeding across the desert, stopping only to shoot at (and always hit) a distant target. In case we missed the point, news anchor narrators assured us the bombs were "smart" and the strikes "surgical." The signification was clear: technology not only bestows power and superiority but enables us to be humane, even in the conduct of war.

We also saw a great deal of interpretation as opposed to documentation. If Vietnam was the first TV war, the Gulf was the first anti-TV war. With the exception of a few

exciting moments when a Scud missile was expected in Israel or Dhahran, correspondents were restricted to talking to us by radio or telephone while the camera focused on a map of the Middle East. Otherwise, various experts, mostly former military men, explained a particular weapon or tactic from a studio thousands of miles from the battlefield. Never was so much stock footage used to convey so little.

While newscasters described tank training, we saw familiar shots of tanks racing across the desert. If there was a report of new air sorties, we saw, for the dozenth time, the same old pictures of planes leaving their airfields; and when the Patriot missiles were discussed, we were treated to endlessly repeated footage of Patriots being uncrated (all cleared by the censors).

In sharp contrast to Vietnam no cameras went with the soldiers into ground combat. We never saw for ourselves that this war was quite separate from our daily lives. For



Juan Thomas. Copyright ©1991 Los Angeles Times. Reprinted by permission.

all the rhetoric, the war was not a truly serious event for most TV viewers — which may have been why some entrepreneurs tried so hard to sell the war to others, through yellow ribbons, bumper stickers and even outdoor advertising.

We saw two other kinds of images, but they were far less visible and much less compelling. One was the image of *warriors*, the U.S. soldiers visited by TV in order to provide us with “human interest.” GIs, somewhat ill at ease, told how they were

systems and local newspapers — and control much of the information in a community.”

Who benefits when every candidate for Congress pays thousands of dollars to television stations in order to run for office?

The celebration of technology in the Gulf War took place on stations increasingly owned and operated by multinationals deeply involved in the production of armaments. General Electric, the tenth largest corporation in the U.S. and one of the largest weapons producers, owns the NBC

TV as Gratifier

Coverage of the war met a number of deep-rooted psychological needs: to feel powerful and in control, to experience extreme emotions in a guilt-free, non-threatening environment, to share emotionally charged experiences with others, to gain a sense of identity, to gain information, to satisfy a belief in justice, to see others make mistakes, to participate in the drama of history (vicariously and without risk) and to affirm moral values.

This aspect of television viewing is perhaps the hardest lesson to accept. It reminds us that television would have no power if it did not have viewers eager to consume its messages. While it is true that television seeks out our psychological needs and meets them in ways that serve particular people's desires for money, power and control, it is also true that every person who views uncritically is asking to be controlled.

What does this analysis tell us about television's messages about the war? That war can be relatively safe, sanitary (surgical), and not terribly costly either in personnel or materiel. That the key to conducting a safe war — and indeed, to keeping us safe in general — is high technology. That our efforts are pure and in the interest of justice, of righting wrongs, of maintaining our way of life and standard of living. And that we are still Number One, a superpower among lesser powers, and consequently have the moral responsibility to police other nations in the interest of peace and justice.

If Vietnam was the first TV war, the Gulf was the first anti-TV war.

eager to “get the job done” and go home, while officers assured us that their troops were fully prepared for attack. These images signified that there were real people over there — on our side, that is.

Media images of *victims* were even less in evidence. We saw family hardship back home in America, especially among “newsworthy” families (a father taking off from work to care for baby while mother was at war, or families encountering economic loss while the breadwinner was away). But the real victims — the more than 50,000 Iraqi soldiers who were fried and pulverized by hundreds of thousands of tons of bombs, or the four million civilians in Baghdad experiencing nightly bombing raids and days with no water, food, electricity or sanitation — were virtually invisible.

network and its stations. Westinghouse, another major defense contractor, owns one of the largest broadcast groups.

Control is not limited to owners. Sponsors also greatly influence the way news is presented. Dupont, IBM, AT&T and ITT are all major television sponsors, and all have major stakes in the public support for high-tech armaments. Who benefits from coverage that celebrates smart bombs and surgical strikes?

In addition to this impressive control exercised by owners and sponsors, the military effectively shut off the press from the war. Malcolm W. Browne, a reporter for the *New York Times*, complained that for “most of the news people most of the time, the Gulf War has been played out in the

“The question is not whether the media are manipulated, but who manipulates them.”

German media critic, Hans Magnus Enzenberger

TV as Economics

Almost 25 years ago the German media critic Hans Magnus Enzenberger pointed out that all media are manipulated in some way: “There is no such thing as unmanipulated writing, filming or broadcasting. The question is, therefore, not whether the media are manipulated, but who manipulates them.”

Who controls TV? The web is complex, but three groups exercise most control: the owners who run it, the advertisers who pay for it, and the government which licenses it.

When we analyze television from an economic perspective, we ask one simple question: Who benefits? Who benefits when the amount of documentaries on the networks decreases each year for 20 years? Who benefits when a single company can own television and radio stations, cable

Dhahran International Hotel.” The press corps of more than a thousand had to rely on a pool system that allowed a handful of persons (picked by the U.S. Armed Forces Joint Information Bureau) to develop the “product” (as the JIB called all forms of news) which would then be used by all other reporters. “In effect,” said Browne, “each pool member is an unpaid employee of the Department of Defense, on whose behalf he or she prepares the news of the war for the outer world.” As a result, “even in Khafji, this war seemed to smell more of greasepaint than death.”

It was no accident that the military changed the word “giddy” to “proud” in a reporter's description of a U.S. pilot after a bombing run. It was no accident that in July 1990 when Saddam Hussein threatened to use fuel air bombs, the press characterized it as another example of his desperation and barbarism, but in February when the U.S. began using the same weapons against Iraqis in their trenches the bombs had become just another “tool” in the U.S. “toolbox.” It was no accident that TV never told us that “smart bombs” constituted less than 10 percent of

those dropped in Iraq, or that it never showed us the "smart bombs" that missed their objectives or hit a civilian target. It was no accident that our planes constantly killed tanks—not men. It was no accident that though our President assured us repeatedly that "we have respect for the people of Iraq," we never really saw them or what we did to them. It was no accident that from the day U.S. troops were deployed to the Gulf until January 3, 1991, TV provided 2,855 minutes of coverage on the Gulf Crisis but only 29 minutes (about one percent) on opposition to the military build-up according

to the watchdog group Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting).

The biases and distortions of television are not simply a conspiracy on the part of a few media moguls; the responsibility is far too diverse and complex for that. But the system itself, which both reflects and amplifies our culture, makes them inevitable.

The owners, sponsors and regulators of American television have a huge stake in the continued funding of armaments, support massive over-runs in high tech products, maintain an enormous military presence and initiate a new round of arms sales

world-wide. To achieve this, television must constantly massage the minds of the American public with the message of power and the myth of the cowboy. During the Gulf War the message was a little more evident than usual.

Dr. Fore is visiting lecturer in communication at Yale University Divinity School and is the author of Television and Religion and Gospel Culture and Media. Copyright 1991 Christian Century Foundation. Reprinted by permission from The Christian Century, April 17, 1991.

THANKS TO THE MEDIA. . . *An Open Letter From President Bush*

By Mark Hertsgaard

Author: journalist Mark Hertsgaard imagines what an open letter from President Bush to the press corps might be like after their performance during the Gulf war.

My dear friends in the press corps:

I come before you today as the proudest Commander in Chief in our nation's history. Thanks to the brave efforts of our sons and daughters, this nation once again stands before the world as a symbol of honor, strength and sacrifice for what is fair and just.

But I want to take special note today of the critical role played in our victory by the men and women of the American news media. Your reporting has been a model of both professionalism and patriotism. No President likes everything that's said about him in the press; in our democratic system, that is as it should be. And I know some Americans believe that the press's coverage of our most recent military conflicts, especially Vietnam, was overly critical and one-sided. But with few exceptions, the news media's performance during the war to liberate Kuwait left this President very pleased indeed.

I was especially impressed by the way you in the media understood and accepted the need for the most stringent military censorship in our history. At times, you did a better job of explaining this imperative to the American people than we in the government did.

You could have chosen to puncture the assumption, shared by most Americans, that censorship is necessary to prevent American casualties. Of course, the truth is our reporters consistently declined to divulge militarily sensitive information during the Gulf War, just as they did during Vietnam and earlier wars. Likewise, had they not been team players, our journalists and news executives could have pointed out that the motivation for wartime censorship had always been primarily political, not military. But you refrained from such needlessly incendiary commentary, and the benefits of this forbearance were shared by all of us.

Because our censorship system was allowed to function so smoothly, our military was largely spared the kind of embarrassing revelations that eventually marred the public record of its liberations of Grenada and Panama. Most important of all, the American people were spared from witnessing the full horror and carnage that is the reality of modern warfare.

I said throughout this conflict that the United States had no quarrel with the people of Iraq. It now appears that, despite our best intentions, the total number of Iraqi dead will be at least 30,000 and perhaps as many as 200,000. By comparison, the bombing of Hiroshima killed approximately 100,000 people. All this is regrettable.

But the men and women of our news media are mature enough to understand

that war is inherently a dirty business. And so, you did not sap our national spirit by emphasizing these kinds of numbers while the war was actually being fought, nor did you carelessly employ words like "massacre" to describe our bombardments. You kept things clean, abstract and admirably bloodless. You showed government-supplied videotape of smart bombs zeroing in for perfect hits, while stressing our assurance that only military sites were being targeted. And you directed accusations of war crimes solely against Saddam Hussein, even though our firepower probably killed more civilians in Iraq than Saddam's did in Kuwait.

Let me close by recalling one of the most heartening lessons of this war. With our greatest victory in the Gulf, this country has finally kicked the Vietnam syndrome. And so, I believe, has its press corps. Thanks to the media's heroic enlistment in the war effort, the American people heard essentially what I, their President, wanted them to hear about this war. I can't think of a finer tribute to the precious American ideal of a free and independent press.

And so, as we savor our triumph, I urge all Americans to join me in expressing our deepest gratitude to all of our brave fighting men and women—whether they fought with tanks and bomber planes or with microphones and television cameras. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart, and God bless America!

LIVING ROOM WARS: Vietnam vs. the Gulf

By Daniel C. Hallin

The collapse of America's "will" to fight in Vietnam resulted from a political process of which the media were only one part. It is hard to see how short of a real turn to authoritarian government, political doubt and controversy could have been contained much longer.

What can be said is that such issues as what was best for the people of Indochina and how substantial a national interest did the U.S. have in its political struggles were never seriously discussed in news coverage of the war, not at any rate in the New York Times coverage during the years when the decision was made to intervene, or in television coverage in subsequent years.

They were not discussed because the constraints of ideology and of journalistic routines tying news coverage to Washington perspectives excluded them from the news agenda. From this angle the implications of government control over the media look very different. Those who imagine that political elites would govern better without the press and the public looking over their shoulders should look back to the decision-making process of the early 1960s that led to American intervention in Vietnam. In the case of Vietnam, excessive authority looks more like the source of imbalance than excessive democracy.

—Daniel C. Hallin
"The Uncensored War":
The Media and Vietnam

One of the most persistent myths about Vietnam is the idea that saturation coverage on television turned the public against the war and that by extension any televised war will lose public support. This assumption motivated the British to place heavy restrictions on television during the Falklands war, and is one of the major reasons the American media in the Gulf faced military censorship for the first time since Korea.

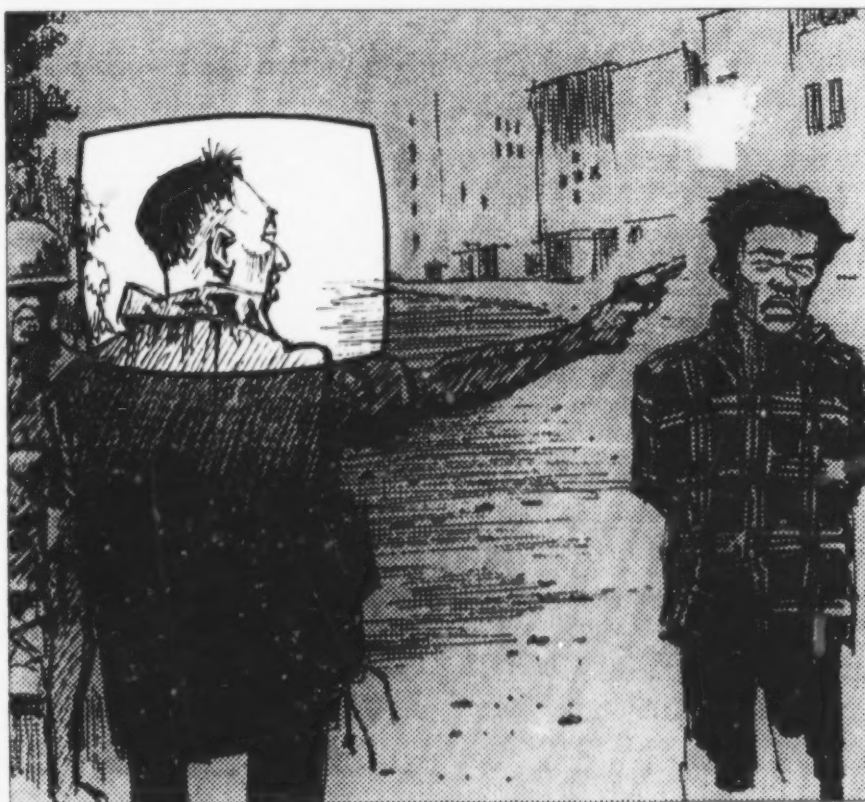
The truth is that television was very far from showing the "true horror of war" in Vietnam, although it wasn't military re-

strictions that limited what we saw. The limits were mainly imposed by television's own relation to its audience, to its government and military sources, and to the soldiers who were the principal characters in the drama of "the living room war." These factors affected what we saw in the Gulf as well, far more than military restrictions, tight as these may have been.

The main story for television in the early years of the "living room war" was "American boys in action." The networks assumed, probably correctly, that this kind of "up close and personal" reporting would appeal most strongly to the public. The morale of American troops was very good when the war began, and most television coverage was filled with vignettes of brave

soldiers and their powerful weaponry, which of course made wonderful visuals for TV. The "big picture" was filled in by military planners. The networks' own policies, meanwhile, limited graphic portrayals of casualties. "Producers and editors must exercise great caution before permitting pictures of casualties to be shown," said one CBS directive. "Shots can be selected that are not grisly, the purpose being not to avoid showing the ugly side of war, but rather to avoid offending families of war victims." This policy, however well-intentioned, had the effect of sanitizing television's image of war.

Television coverage did not become substantially more sober until the public, Washington officials and the soldiers in the



IF THE MILITARY HAD BEEN CONTROLLING THE PRESS IN THE VIETNAM WAR...

field had already lost confidence that the war could be won. Television, in other words, was more a follower than a leader of public opinion.

Much of the public seems also to assume that the media in Vietnam were a threat to military security, judging from polls that show support for tight restrictions on journalists in the Gulf. But this is also incorrect. Several examinations of the voluntary guidelines used in Vietnam, which were far

looser than restriction on journalists in the Gulf, found that these guidelines worked well. This was the conclusion reached by a Twentieth Century Fund task force on the military and the media, as well as a study by William M. Hammond of the Army's Office of Military History.

Today's living room war is not so different from that of 1965. Images of technology still fascinate, although the far glitzier "smart bombs" videos have replaced the old bomb-

sight films of Vietnam. The media's military analyses, presented in a language drained of any sense of the political meaning or human cost of war, echo the earlier war reporting.

Daniel C. Hallin is associate professor of communication at the University of California, San Diego. Copyright 1991 Extra! Reprinted by permission from the May 1991 special issue.

MEDIA IMAGES PITCH WAR FOR PROFIT

By Ronald K.L. Collins

Like many other media events, the lure of Persian Gulf war profits brought out the worst in many marketers. Not patriotism, not pride, not even the prospect of peace seemed as important for many as the commercial value of these ideals.

"We're trying not to do things to commercialize the war," a spokesperson for a prominent Washington, D.C. department store claimed during the conflict. Such restraint shows respect for the men and women involved in the armed forces and makes a sober statement about war's deadly realities. It also honors national value systems and symbols through an unwillingness to profane core beliefs by equating them with idle consumption.

But such lofty ideals are the exception. "Patriotic merchandise," as a Bloomingdale's CEO approvingly called it, was more in commercial vogue. Retailers rallied around the flag to push products. In the "Stars & Stripes" shop at New York City's Bloomingdale's, for example, the varieties of "patriotic merchandise" included a daily red, white and blue parade of housewares, designer clothes, pillows and even appropriately colored tins of bubblegum. Incredible. Profit and frivolity working in tandem to exploit the tragedy of war.

Corporate opportunism also frequently hides behind the veil of patriotism. Take, for example, Nynex Corporation's war-

time television ads. The telecommunications company, which spends \$20 million annually on image advertising, hired a New York ad agency (Sawyer/Miller Group) to produce a soft-sell commercial suitable for the military coverage "news environment." Taking advantage of lower wartime ad rates, Nynex situated its commercial image between the soldiers on the front lines and their families at home.

The soft-sell idea aims to touch the hearts of Americans while tapping their wallets. And, of course, Nynex was not alone in this commercial campaign venture. Anheuser-

At Bloomingdale's, for example, the varieties of "patriotic merchandise" included a daily array of red, white and blue housewares, designer clothes, pillows and even appropriately colored tins of bubblegum.

Busch rolled out its 1985 "Here's To You, America" Budweiser ad, while Boeing recycled its "America the Beautiful" commercial, replete with a Marine playing taps at a cemetery. Not to be outdone, Lorillard (the makers of Kent, Newport and True cigarettes) printed yellow stripes on the corners of its print and billboard ads. The companies' actual wartime message, of course, was more like "Here's to Us, America." But not all war opportunism was so subtle.

The military-toy business folks were busy capitalizing on the war in much more open

ways. Desert camouflage color is still being sprayed on every war toy in sight. New toy lines flaunt "Operation Desert Storm" labels. Behind all the kiddie hype is a raw message to parents: "Be American, buy our Gulf War toys."

War is a terrible, solemn fact. We may support it or oppose it. But we should not allow marketers to demean the solemnity of the war by capitalizing on it. In Amman, Jordan there were "Saddam burgers" and "Scud sandwiches." "Scuds are the best thing for business," said a Jordanian marketer. Though their political messages are different, the commercial mindset of these Jordanians and their American counterparts is the same — there is profit in war, though U.S. marketers amplify their messages with multi-million-dollar

ad campaigns.

Neither "patriotic" bubblegum tins nor "patriotic" sandwiches represent who we are or should be. Likewise, soft-sell plays seek to rob us of our symbols and sentiments by enlisting them in the service of sales. In the end, there is nothing noble about pitching war for profit.

Ronald K.L. Collins teaches law at Catholic University Law School and is co-founder of the Center for the Study of Commercialism, a nonprofit group in Washington, D.C. Reprinted with permission from advice.

LESSONS TO LEARN:

How to Evaluate War Reporting

By Angela and John Powers

In coverage of the war in the Middle East, as in coverage of earlier wars, "quicker" seemed to be better, and "quickest" best. From Edward R. Murrow's descriptions of the London bombings during World War II, through television's sweeping nightly coverage of the Vietnam War, a trend toward immediacy developed which today manifests itself as the modus operandi for American television news. This ratings-fueled production ethic, however, may have compromised the effective mass communication vital to sustaining our democracy.

Despite the volume of wartime information available through the media, details can be distracting, especially those that come from television coverage. Viewers are left with simplistic impressions, pro or con, of the war. "Nintendo"-like electronic pictures from a single sortie over Baghdad convey little about the feelings and attitudes of the crew, or the people below.

Further impeding the news process during the war and simultaneously depriving viewers of the opportunity to process "facts," yesterday's "photo opportunities" are reduced to today's "electronic handouts."

*Total objectivity is an impossibility.
There will always be one more horrific picture
to potentially alter the story.*

The Pentagon orders that correspondents be escorted by the military around battle areas, and that their reports be subject to security review. Under such a scenario, the reporter is not gathering news in the traditional sense, but is merely the conduit for military spokespersons. Inevitably, the responsible reporter risks being perceived as a player, not an objective observer.

Total objectivity is an impossibility. There will always be one more horrific picture to potentially alter the story. Thus pain comes not only from war, but from the

coverage itself, as evidenced by arguments over Vietnam war coverage and bias.

Few would argue that the famous Vietnam-era footage of the young girl running for her life while on fire from a napalm strike had a strong effect on anti-war sentiment. Nevertheless, others would correctly point out that Vietnam coverage included

What can be reasonably expected from reporters so that the Gulf War, or any future conflict, can be comprehended and acted upon accordingly?

no pictures of our POWs being tortured and maimed, or of our own infantrymen, some only slightly wounded in battle, killed by a single shot to the head. These pictures did not make the evening news. So it seems that even if the press were free to pursue stories with minimal restrictions, as it was in Vietnam, no consensus would be reached regarding the reality of the war. What, then, can be reasonably expected from today's reporters so that the Gulf War, or any future

Third, the media need to prepare to cover the inevitable diplomatic efforts that will be required to make a lasting peace at war's end. Substantive background pieces on various peoples and governments in the region are needed.

Fourth, when the shooting stops, the media should continue to present substan-

tive reports on the myriad issues facing the region. In the Middle East, the media must forthrightly analyze such topics as the relationships between the governing and the governed in the region, the equitableness in the control and distribution of oil, and, inevitably, the potential for Palestinian/Israeli accommodation.

Finally, until the shooting war ends, news media must act thoughtfully and soberly to ensure that television news covers the hellish reality of war.

Vietnam veteran and author Tim O'Brien states: "As the first rule of thumb, therefore, you can tell a war story by its absolute and uncompromising allegiance to obscenity and evil." Stories from the theater of war, regardless of how well-crafted, which fail to convey the two-sided horror of this or any other war should be discounted as inept in the best case, and dismissed as purveyors of propaganda at worst. A less critical, more passive response encourages the perpetuation of the myths of war, and thereby keeps the horror of war remotely intact.

Angela Powers is an assistant professor at Northern Illinois University. John Powers is an independent writer who served in Vietnam as a combat correspondent. Reprinted with permission from the spring issue of Media Ethics Update.

FAR FROM COMPLETE: *The Illusion of Wall-to-Wall Coverage*

By Hugo Young

"Truth is the first casualty of war."

As an axiom, the famous epigram has its limitations. It assumes that, outside war, there exists some kind of utopia of truth which only the special circumstance of battle has destroyed. The fact is that, even in peacetime, truth-in-government is an elusive commodity, always to be fought for against the forces of propaganda. War, in one sense, merely accentuates the conditions of peace, in which truth-telling is destined always to be imperfect. War is the circumstance in which truth is most desperately sought, yet is at the same time hardest to discover.

Even without information control, it would be impossible to convey anything like a complete account of what allied bombing did in the Persian Gulf War. We saw the crosshairs on the bomber's target, but the truth about 50,000 sorties is beyond discovery by anyone. Similarly, the true state of mind of the enemy is a closed book. An entire dimension of the war is therefore completely out of reach.

This time, however, one difference is important and begins to give substance to the discontent. Although the whole truth is no more available than it ever was, the illusion of truth is more strongly present than it has ever been. This is the achievement of wall-to-wall television. Here is this powerful medium, uniquely the medium of the actual and believable, devoting so much time to the war that unwary viewers may be easily lulled into the belief that

their picture is complete.

In a war at which the world was offered a grandstand seat, warriors and reporters were thrown inexorably together — on the warrior's terms. The technology of modern journalism may have liberating effects, but it also constructs its own prison. Behind the illusion of comprehensive coverage, the broadcasters de-

livered only what they were allowed to.

When we saw the damage of the Scud missiles or the wreckage of war in Khafji, we got a glimpse of what it was really like — while later discovering that this action, too, was only a small part of wider action the cameras were not present to record. The soothing absurdity of laser-guided missiles so precise that not a civilian hair was touched needed exposing.

Television is a party to half-truths so pervasive that they might be called Un-truth. Its view is usually so remote, and always so controlled, that the images of comprehensive actuality are in fact nothing of the kind. It is more anxious to fill its vast quantity of space with a facsimile of truth than to remind viewers in every sentence that what they are seeing is incomplete and quite possibly false.

It was probably fanciful to expect to learn daily the truth about this war. The concerned citizen must live in frustrated ignorance about precisely what is going on. The best to be hoped for was that nobody should have supposed that what they hear in any medium is reliably true; and, which is the greater point, that we should have restrained ourselves from actually wanting to be lied to — as what might be called the patriotic school of journalism would prefer.

Hugo Young is a staff writer for the Guardian Weekly. Copyright 1991 Guardian Weekly. Reprinted with permission.

Tom Herzberg is a freelance illustrator in Chicago.



MARKETING THE MILITARY:

Should Soldiering Be Sold Like Soap or Lipstick?

By Daniel A. Buford

Since this article first appeared in Media&Values #39 "Militarism: The Media Connection," (Spring, 1987) the volunteer army—recruited through advertising and marketing programs like those described—has been to war. Although today's advertising programs may vary in message or detail, they still center on commercial marketing techniques. In the aftermath of the Gulf War, activist organizations have scored some successes in persuading local school boards to review campus recruiting programs and provide access for other voices. Several school districts are working to regulate recruiter access to students, but there are legislative proposals pending which would penalize these same school districts for these restrictions. As other young men and women ponder their futures, the implications of using advertising techniques to sell military service should continue to be evaluated.

On October 23, 1983, two days before the invasion of Grenada, young men watching football all over the United States were interrupted by the tragic news of a surprise terrorist attack that killed 240 U.S. Marines in Beirut.

The same football game also featured another kind of interruption—numerous paid commercials for the military services—Army, Navy, and Air Force as well as the Marines. The ads shown that day, and others like them, were carefully targeted to appeal to the dreams, aspirations and desire for adventure of potential recruits.

These appeals are bolstered by a substantial investment in reserve officer training programs for youngsters as young as 14, and an array of scholarships, incentive programs and special offers that sell the military as a viable career choice not only for young men but women as well.

Peacetime recruitment has always depended on a combination of incentives and images. But the ending of the draft and the institution of an all-volunteer Army combined with a Reagan-era military buildup has placed all recruiting eggs in the marketing basket. Expensive television time and slick advertisements have become a mainstay of the military's marketing program—to the tune of \$200 million dollars annually, ac-

often come to young people with the authority and access provided by youngsters' community schools.

In several states, school districts must give lists of their graduating seniors to recruiters. As one anti-military activist puts it, "That gives them the chance to zero in on kids they want—the ones who scored well on the army's vocational tests." Indeed, one California mother remembers vividly the calls and literature received by her high-scoring daughter.

By the time a hypothetical high school senior's name is submitted, he—or she—has already been exposed to a number of possible contacts with the military. Advertisements in consumer media and specialized publications are only the first level of weaponry in the military's recruitment arsenal. The services' substantial recruitment budget, \$1.7 billion in 1986-87, also pays for:

- distribution of brochures and recruiting literature through local high schools;
- "career day" presentations during which recruit-

ers have a chance to pitch the military service to kids;

- school endorsement of Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs that train youngsters in drills and procedures that help prepare them for college ROTC;
- administration—during school hours



Illustration by Cynthia Leach/Progress

cording to a survey in *Advertising Age*.

Like any consumer campaign, the televised vignette or full-page magazine spread is only the linchpin of a complex distribution and marketing system. But military services have an advantage that purveyors of ordinary consumer products lack: They

—of the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) test which, although not mandatory, is offered by a large number of school districts nationwide. A survey, for example, showed that it was administered in 80 percent of Philadelphia-area high schools and at least 50 percent of those in New York City.

A more specialized military training ground, the military public school, has only penetrated a few communities in the South

are particularly evident.

For example, the "95 Bravo Military Police" Army recruitment advertisement appears in several black magazines, like *Ebony*, *Essence*, *Jet* and *The National Leader*. Part of the "Be All You Can Be" campaign, it features three men in camouflage uniforms behind machine guns in a wooded area. A black soldier smiles at the camera from the foreground. The soldiers' Darth Vader-type helmets, based on a new

service and may not be able to apply narrow military skills to civilian jobs once they get out. In fact, according to a 1986 *Wall Street Journal* article, unemployment rates for veterans were higher than the norm, and studies showed that only a small number (12 percent for men and six percent for women) made any use of their military skills in civilian jobs.

"Recruiting ads often don't even meet the same standards for accuracy required of consumer ads," comments Tracy Westen, a professor at the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Southern California and a former staff member at the Federal Trade Commission. "Yet because they benefit from the U.S. government's credibility, people don't view them with the same skepticism as ordinary advertising. If anything, they ought to be held to a more demanding standard."

Instead, potential recruits are wooed by appeals to adventure, team spirit, manliness and athletic ability. One advertisement for the National Guard in the junior high school magazine *Scholastic Scope*, makes a fervent appeal to youngsters' desire for maturity. Placed against a background of national guardsmen out on bivouac, the ad exhorts them to "Kiss your momma goodbye, and make her proud she raised a man."

Although not as big a target, women are not ignored by recruiting literature. "Some of the best soldiers wear lipstick," runs one advertising slogan.

In an attempt to appeal to young athletes, ads also exploit the long-standing equation of military life with sports.

According to a 1978 *Time* magazine article: "The military has spent a good deal

"...few other professional opportunities include the opportunity to continue your music education, travel and play first rate instruments with other first rate musicians ...Army Band. Be All You Can Be..."

advertisement from *Doubeat* magazine

and Midwest. Presented as a form of a magnet school or enriched curriculum, such schools provide military training combined with the normal curriculum, aided by government support for materials, textbooks and some instruction. In Cincinnati, Ohio, such a proposed academy was voted down after a bitter campaign.

The level of participation in all these programs depends on the school district, but the military dollar is seen as a viable supplement to school systems faced with an eroding tax base, and cuts from federal and state educational funds — struggling to provide information on career options.

Outside of school, youngsters are exposed not only to the military's media campaign, but to a whole culture — from movies to video games — that glorify a war mentality and present military service as a glamorous proving ground for attaining maturity.

Creating the Mystique

Pressure to create the volunteer army was building just as the population of 18-year-old males decreased in the early 1980s. Nevertheless, the recruiting slump of the late 1970s was reversed by 1982. The effectiveness of military advertising and the strong recruitment network it supports deserves much of the credit.

Photographic imagery that sanctions the military status quo is easy to spot in any review of popular magazines, newspapers and recruitment materials. Appeals to members of racial and ethnic groups, who have fewer educational and employment options and thus find the military more attractive,

issue that appeared after the Grenada invasion, add to the scene's visual impact.

Army brochures focus on black soldiers' upper-level service jobs and usually picture them smiling. Similar ads are also oriented towards Latinos in publications ranging from Spanish-language newspapers to *Hispanic Engineer*.

Obviously, the campaign theme, "Be All You Can Be" is intended to suggest a bright future for enlistees. All too often, however, pictures of smiling GIs and copy promising a smooth transition "from high school to flight school" create false expectations for youths unaware of the racism inherent in the military command structure.

The young man or woman visiting the recruiting office, however, is often responding to other pressures. Military ads and recruiting packages stress the long-term

"We're not just a company, we're your country, we're the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines... a great place to start."

recruiting slogan

career goals, scholarship programs and specialized training, all designed to make enlistment appear to be the first step in an ambitious youngster's path to a stimulating and rewarding job following military service.

Do these ads promise more than the services deliver? Yes, according to many experts who point out that enlistees often do not get promised assignments while in the

of money developing personality profiles of soldiers in an attempt to learn which recruits are likely to fight well, commit atrocities or stand up to enemy interrogation." One study showed that those who will be "fighters" tend to be sports-oriented, sarcastic and spontaneous.

Thus, recruitment advertisements portray helmeted men engaged in the same

basic activities as football players, such as running, jumping and hitting the deck. *Sports Illustrated* carries army airborne recruitment ads encouraging weightlifters to sign up because they would have no problem carrying "an 80-pound backpack and a weapon."

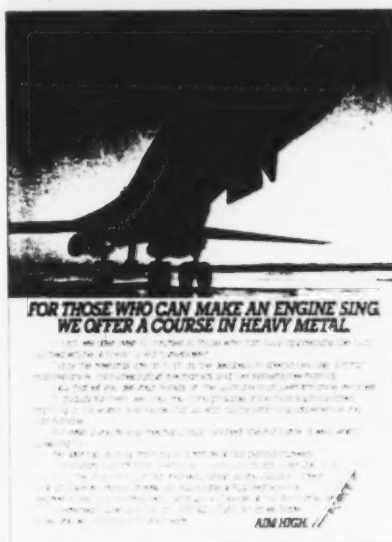
Sales Techniques

Modern communications networks and computer tabulation of tests and profiles on potential recruits help the recruiter seeking to "close the sale." "The marketing terminology is apt," says Rick Jahnkow, a member of the board of directors of the Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities (Project YANO), an Encinitas, California, counter-recruitment organization.

"Recruiters are trained to close the sale," says Jahnkow. "A common selling technique they use is not to say 'Do you want to enlist?' but 'Which plan do you want?'" "We've also heard of recruiters visiting recruits at home, or picking them up to go sign paperwork. Recruiters hand out T-shirts, combs, even watches. It's very similar to any other sales program. You could even compare it to the kind of courting that goes on when colleges are recruiting star athletes." If young people are open to these appeals, it may be because they are hearing nothing else. Other voices are beginning to be raised, however.

The counter-recruitment effort centers on presenting additional facts about the military service lifestyle, so that the young person has a chance to think beyond the high-pressure pitch of recruiters and slick advertising gimmicks.

If recruitment relies on a world view that depends on hard-sell enticement, entrapment and ignorance, counter-recruitment must rely on a compassionate, intelligent



reminder of what is lost in the recruiter's spiel. Even in the school system, the need for this other side is beginning to be recognized. The Chicago chapter of Clergy and Laity Concerned (CALC) won a controversial legal battle over the issue of providing equal access in the schools for peace alternative counselors.

More such battles need to be fought. Young people who enlist or resist should be given the advantage of making an informed decision based on a critical evaluation of what military life realistically has to offer. Consequently, pre-enlistment information and values clarification counseling needs to be available to youth so that service in the Armed Forces can be a positive experience based on truth rather than a fantasy based on flight from civilian unemployment, peer pressure, or war movie imagery. CALC and other organizations — Youth Against Militarism (YAM), Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities (YANO),

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), War Resister's League (WRL) — all have active programs, and can provide information for use in congregational, community and educational settings.

Ultimately, the preoccupation with arms is a preoccupation with death. Military service is more than a nine-to-five job; it's a lifestyle with a value system based on killing and death.

Although presented as lucrative and exciting, the ads that sell military service manage to ignore the horrors of war and the possibility of sacrificing life itself. People of faith who value peace and the affirmation of life must count the cost of a militaristic mindset — as well as the cost of silence as military expenditures rob the nation's poor of basic social services.

It should not be necessary to pick up a gun to stay alive, nor to wear a uniform to find meaning in life. But for many young people the only preparation for this decision is growing up in a violent culture that presents war as excitement, killing as manly and the world as an arena in which God fights on the side of the winning gladiators. When militarism becomes an idol and religious ethics are merged with military goals, military recruiting becomes a call to a holy war. We abhor the effect of such holy wars in other societies; we can't take it for granted in our own.

Rev. Daniel A. Buford is a sculptor who teaches sculpture in Northern California's San Bruno County Jail. He is the former director of the Ecumenical Peace Institute and continues to write and speak on these issues. This article was condensed from a 1986 study, Counting the Costs, for the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Re:Action

Getting a Handle on Military Advertising

Recruiting ads are all around us. Instead of tuning them out or turning the page, put them on the agenda of your study or discussion group. Plan one — or both — of these activities for a future class or group meeting:

- Pick up a selection of youth, sports and minority publications (*Boy's Life*, *Scholastic Scope*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Ebony* and *Hola*), among others) at your local

newsstand or library. Copy or clip the recruiting ads. Display them in your group and discuss: What is the appeal in each ad? Is it realistic? To what age, sex, race, socio-economic level is the ad directed? What is the picture of military life that comes through the armed services ad campaign?

- Monitor an afternoon of sports programs and note down the variety, duration

and frequency of commercials for the military. (If possible, collect them on videotape for replaying with your group.) What ages and/or ethnic groups do they target? Do the commercials try to enhance the military's image as well as promote recruitment? Do they make the military service look exciting and glamorous? What visual or sound techniques enhance the commercial's message?

C HILDREN AND WAR

Special Programs Help Kids Understand Better

By David Ruth

For once, television's impact on children was recognized. Their questions and worries about the war being broadcast in their living rooms became a subject of special concern during the Persian Gulf conflict. Several TV specials, commercials and pamphlets addressed children and their needs in time of war.

While PBS' beloved Mr. Rogers filmed several public television spots reassuring children ("You'll always have someone to love you, no matter what"), the biggest departure from selling toys and candy as usual came from NBC and ABC.

Playing against CBS' usual fare, the two networks each interrupted Saturday morning cartoons to broadcast specials answering children's war-related questions. With network anchors such as ABC's Peter Jennings, and Garrick Utley and Mary Alice Williams on NBC, around-the-world experts and sophisticated graphics, children had the chance to air their fears and absorb background information on the war that was designed just for them.

Other efforts were directed to parents

and teachers, advising them how to talk to their children about war. These ranged from such efforts as a PBS special and brochure, *Kids Ask About War*, to an issue of the *WarChild Monitor* devoted to informing parents about children's concerns and how to address them.

Certainly, addressing children's fear and anxiety about war is a praiseworthy goal, even if war isn't. As Daniel Striped Tiger told King Friday the 13th on *Mr. Roger's Neighborhood*, children are scared by wars, "even though they don't make them themselves."

"Very well," replies the King, "I shall make a rule: All children shall be well taken care of in this neighborhood and beyond — in times of war and in times of peace."

Surely we don't need a war for such a good resolution.

David Ruth is a graduate student in cinema at the University of Southern California and editorial assistant at Media&Values.



Kurt Vonnegut's Vision Is Still Profoundly Timeless Commentary

Billy looked at the clock on the gas stove. He had an hour to kill. He went into the living room, swinging the bottle like a dinner bell, turned on the television. He came slightly unstuck in time, saw the late movie backwards, then forwards again. It was about American bombers in the Second World War and the gallant men who flew them. Seen backwards by Billy, the story went like this:

American planes, full of holes and wounded men and corpses took off backwards from an airfield in England. Over France, a few German fighter planes flew at them backwards, sucked bullets and shell fragments from some of the planes and crewmen. They did the same for wrecked

American bombers on the ground, and those planes flew up backwards to join the formation.

The formation flew backwards over a German city that was in flames. The bombers opened their bomb-bay doors, exerted a miraculous magnetism which shrunk the fires, gathered them into cylindrical steel containers into the bellies of the planes. The containers were stored neatly in racks. The Germans below had miraculous devices of their own, which were long steel tubes. They used them to suck more fragments from the crewmen and planes. But there were still a few wounded Americans, though, and some of the bombers were in bad repair. Over France, though, German

fighters came up again, made everything and everybody as good as new.

When the bombers got back to their base, the steel cylinders were taken from the racks and shipped back to the United States of America, where factories were operating night and day, dismantling the cylinders, separating the dangerous contents into minerals. Touchingly, it was mainly women who did this work. The minerals were then shipped to specialists in remote areas. It was their business to put them into the ground, to hide them cleverly, so they would never hurt anybody ever again....

—Slaughterhouse Five, by Kurt Vonnegut
Reprinted with permission.

UNTYING THE YELLOW RIBBON

Gulf War Coverage Wrapped in Controversy

By Eric L. Vollmer

As the first jets and missiles skyrocketed over Iraq and Kuwait in mid-January, the American media looked on in wide-eyed wonder at the high-technology war the U.S. military was staging in the Middle East. Through the five weeks of aerial bombardment and the four days of the ground assault, our news commentators doubled as virtual cheerleaders of the spectacle.

Summarizing the event, Andy Rooney of *60 Minutes* led the congratulations: "This war in the Gulf has been, by all odds, the best war in modern history. Not only for America but for the whole world, including Iraq probably. It was short and the objectives of victory were honorable. We did the Right Thing." Johnny Carson paid special tribute to Lt. General Thomas Kelly when he returned home from his Mideast assignment as one of the Pentagon's Top Press Briefers. The *Tonight* show featured a film clip of Kelly's parting words to the Gulf press corps, including his testimony on the "importance of a free press in a democracy," as his captive audience of journalists looked on. Carson was so taken by the performance that he confided to Kelly, talk show host to talk show host, "I'm going to miss your show."

What kind of surprises are in store for us when we undo the yellow ribbons from the Pentagon's media package? Are we likely to find anything that either honored or upheld the importance of a free press as Lt. General Kelly proclaimed, or will we find endless rolls of video imagery full of sound and fury, but signifying nothing?

Let's consider some of the key features of news reporting. The English author, Stuart Hall, has outlined several characteristics of modern news gathering. For instance, the media never simply report an event. When the international incident of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait oc-



Photo courtesy of Rick Reinhard. Reprinted by permission.

curred, journalists helped to organize the public debate. They sought out experts, politicians and defense analysts, who, in turn, defined the points of view on which decisions were to be made on how our nation would respond to the aggression. On the occasion of Iraq's sudden military actions in the Middle East, the experts divided the options facing us evenly between a

sumption. The media "mapped" the events for us and attempted to frame them in such a way that we could envision the significance of events in the Persian Gulf within our "picture of the world." Our collective maps are fuzzy when it comes to history in the Arab region, so the news coverage focused on oil, Israel and U.S. defense interests. This conceptual map also served as a kind of "scenario" or public script for subsequent actions.

Video Language

Over the last few decades, customary standards of news gathering and reporting were altered as video imagery became the new language of our politics. An overwhelming flow of visuals is now brought to us by the men and women of the television news business, our chief source of news today. These images, driven by their ability to excite, entertain and attract attention for advertisers, are largely accepted as reflecting "reality." These new "maps" guide our thoughts on current issues by making their primary appeal through sound bites and rapid-fire visuals rather than through extended dialogue and exchange of views.

The "Persian Gulf crisis" was presented on the television news as a series of *Movie of the Week* titles beginning with "Desert Shield" and climaxing in the largest aerial bombardment ever in the history of warfare: "Desert Storm." Television structured this history-making event around its own

"I'm going to miss your show."

Johnny Carson to Lt. General Thomas Kelly
at the end of the Persian Gulf War

military response and diplomatic/economic sanctions. Hall points out that all news events are set within a prescribed context. Our press and broadcasters created an "explanatory framework," a news story in which they attempted to make sense of the reports on Saddam Hussein's troop movements and his ultimate intentions for our con-

fascination with images instead of older social forms of reasoned discourse. We followed a carefully crafted news story that ultimately chartered us onto the course the administration chose to challenge Iraq's Saddam Hussein. We watched as our president courted our opinions to support his war effort with emotionally charged

images instead of thoughtful political argumentation. Television news reporters presented George Bush declaring Saddam Hussein another Adolf Hitler, counterpointed with scenes of the Iraqi leader looking dictatorial.

Ben Bagdikian, the author of *Media Monopoly*, has observed that politicians have learned how "you can entice TV producers with just the kind of footage they love, which is the kind of footage that keeps audiences from turning the switch... Not too many words or ideas, but action, pleasing and brief."

Another Munich

By invoking Hitler and World War II associations, President Bush and various U.S. military officials were able to portray Hussein's seizure of Kuwait as being virtually the same as Hitler's unopposed takeover of Czechoslovakia. Television obliged by presenting black and white archival footage from the Nazi era right along with its companion story of Neville Chamberlain's infamous pre-World War II appeasement of Hitler in Munich.

This identification helped the administration cast doubt on the "sanctions" option. Pressing the "Hitler" hot button also gave Bush's order to commit an additional 125,000 troops to the Saudi Arabian desert on November 8, 1990 an extra boost by further insinuating that the United States was "dealing with a madman."

Desert Shield became its own sequel, anticipating and outmaneuvering the congressional debate on the war issue by setting the parameters of the Senate and House discussions in the mass media a month before they took place. All of this scene stealing took place right before the eyes of the television cameras. But TV journalists never seriously challenged the erroneous historical parallels being reeled out for television consumption or questioned congressional issue setting.

What's wrong with presidents and Pentagon officials mastering public relations and using their training in TV storytelling devices to present their version of public events? Didn't 80 percent of poll respondents questioned say they approved of all the military restrictions placed on the reporting of the war? How can one argue with the nearly instant and painless "success" the Desert Storm program delivered?

In his June 1991 PBS special, *After the War*, well-known interviewer and com-

mentator Bill Moyers voiced one of the most eloquent critical analyses of Gulf War coverage. Quoting Albert Einstein's rueful comment that the "people are ruled by being told tall tales," Moyers countered: "Our role as journalists is not to pass along all the 'tall tales' unexamined. We can balance the scales. We can point out the contradictions and hold official pronouncements up for public scrutiny and open debate."

Moyers struck that journalistic balance. He demonstrated that what we saw in Desert Storm was "not the war, but was the *official report* of the war." Now that the U.S. censorship is lifted, we can begin to explore the consequences of our military's actions in the region. Moyers informs us, for instance, that of the 88,500 tons of explosives that the U.S. and our Allies dropped on Iraq and Kuwait, 70 percent of those bombs missed their targets! The pinpoint images that we saw from the air spared us the severed limbs and dead bodies that might have shed light on one media tall tale, the myth of "precision bombing."

Moyers concludes by asking if our "national security" interests might be better served by increasing our capacity to survive on earth than by any further proofs of our ability to destroy!

Unfortunately, the cinematic version of the Gulf conflict made it difficult—if not impossible—for the media to make crucial connections between reality and the presentation of war as a television miniseries. Censorship and public relations stage management don't help, but the media's will to subject the administration to cross examination is essential for critical coverage.

How can we distinguish between victory and defeat if journalists are unwilling to step beyond flattery of presidents and commanding generals? As *Harper's* editor Lewis Lapham remarks: "A servile media is a circus act just as loudly and laughingly cheered by a military dictatorship as by a democratic republic." Let's bring back a media that reflects our values.

Eric Vollmer is a free-lance writer, teacher and researcher in Los Angeles.

Re:Action

How Jargon Turns Gore into Glory

Doublespeak is not lying, nor is it merely sloppy language; it is the intentional use of euphemisms, synonyms, jargon and vagueness which pretends to communicate but really does not or implies the opposite of what it would appear to communicate.

— Metta Winter, Christian Science Monitor

For centuries before George Orwell coined the word "doublespeak" to convey the flavor of government-sponsored linguistic deception, soldiers have used language to mask the horror of war.

Military jargon has always specialized in turning gore into glory. Many modern conflicts have also focused on sports metaphors that, as many critics have noted, trivialize war. The Gulf War provided "superb examples of doublespeak that managed to turn carnage into something cold and drained of emotion," comments *The Media and the Gulf War: A Case Study* (The Association for Media Literacy/Ontario). Many magazines and newspapers "translated" selected collections for their readers.

The following list can be used to start a war jargon collection. Discussing expressions in a class or group can help participants recognize the ways they distort and mislead.

surgical strike.....	precision bombing
laying down a carpet.....	saturation bombing
denying the enemy.....	bombing military targets in the hearts of cities
assets.....	bombs
collateral bombing.....	civilian deaths during bombing raids
incontinent ordnance.....	mistaken shelling of one's own troops
assertive disarmament.....	destruction of the enemy's fire power

Adapted with permission from Media and the Gulf War: A Case Study by The Association for Media Literacy, Ontario, Canada.

REFLECTION/ACTION FORUM

Images of War

A View From Jerusalem

Communication expert Elihu Katz watched the Gulf War from Israel. The following are some of his notes on the war.

1. Packaging the war.

The media "decided" that the Gulf crisis should be told as a gladiatorial contest. Since gladiators must be equal opponents or the contest is no fun, the media helped make them so, offering "equal time" for contestants to trade public threats and insults while getting ready to fight. Because the spectators need to know the "good guys," one side was painted black and the other white, and morality was superimposed.

2. Are media warmongers?

The answer is more no than yes, at least nowadays. It is true that journalism loves conflict, especially conflict between "them" and "us." But television is a personalizing medium, evoking empathy as much for refugee families streaming out of Iraq as for American families about to send sons to the front. In the decades of unpopular wars—Vietnam, Lebanon, the Falklands, Grenada, Panama—the quality media often refuse to suspend criticism, even when the nation goes to war.

3. Talking over heads.

Totalitarian propaganda finds it easier to invade democracy than vice versa. Coverage of American checks and balances at work—the White House vs. the Congress, debate and so forth, provided some of the most heartening signs of the weeks before the war. Given these cleavages—institutional and spontaneous, real and illusory—Saddam Hussein could score some points. For his part, Bush only made a fool of himself by assuming that there was an Iraqi public to appeal to, over their leader's head.

4. Communication needs.

In war and crisis, the public needs orientation on how to behave, interpretation of what is happening, a means to manage tension and a sense of solidarity. The warmth with which Israelis talk about radio and television demonstrate their importance. Television's drama and children's programs provide tension release. But radio's intimacy, immediacy and interactivity also helps listeners cope with tension—and it has an honored place in our sealed rooms. The nonstop flow of civil defense questions and answers on radio has an almost ritual aspect, reminding one of the preoccupation with details in ceremonial performance.

5. Wartime media integrate societies.

People sit riveted to their television sets to view events such as moon landings, coronations, revolutions and war. On such ceremonial and catastrophic occasions, the much-maligned media are suddenly redeemed and allowed to speak monopolistically to a population dispersed like nuclear cells and longing to join together. In Israel, the visit of Anwar Sadat to Jerusalem in 1977 and the arrival of the Ethiopian immigrants in 1991 were among many such historic broadcasts. Ironically, the nightly Gulf War news programs, with Jewish hawks, Jewish doves and Arabs sitting together, as it were, to watch the same single-channel television news, have something of the same flavor. By contrast, only one-third of Americans view any national news on an average evening.

6. Does Israel need a national orienter?

In wars in 1967 and again in 1973 we were blessed with Gen. Chaim Herzog as a semi-

official commentator, offering interpretation and reassurance. Today we have the army spokesman, to whom all defer when official orientation is called for, while pluralism (and some censorship) prevails the rest of the time. External control is evident between the sirens, when it is clear that information is being withheld. Then rumor and dial-twisting seem rife.

7. Differences Pictures Make.

Television pushes journalism into the action, but it is often impossible to see the forest for the foliage. The small sample of reality that results is too often mistaken for the larger picture. A case can be made that the legendary journalists at the bar of the local Hilton "see" more. And one picture does not equal a thousand words: the picture of the ruins of Baghdad on the morning after a bombing raid can support both the "surgical precision" reported by CNN and the "slight damage" noted by Jordan TV.

8. CNN Wins.

Its success, so far, has been determined by its interruptibility. The American networks were also represented in Baghdad, but ABC and NBC are in no hurry to interrupt a well-sponsored soap opera or sitcom to broadcast a news flash from Baghdad or Riyadh. They have news programs at regular hours. And they don't broadcast to the world. The high visibility of CNN in Israel is created by our own TV news editors, who monitor it continually. But one wonders when U.S. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and his generals cite it as a source. If they see what we see, they don't know very much.

Elihu Katz is on the faculty of Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Reprinted with permission from The Jerusalem Report, January 31, 1991.

War 'Game' Casts Iraqis as Losers

By Fadwa El Guindi

As if in concert with an orchestrated U.S. management of the war image and control of public opinion, television coverage of the Gulf conflict appeared to be in harmony with the administration's language and style. When President Bush reported significant decisions about the Gulf war at his week-end retreat, smiling at reporters and swinging his golf club in a carefree manner, he affected a masculinized language of controlled domination over a defiant, resource-rich world of Arabs and Islam.

It is a world painted in the minds of the West by Orientalist imaginations of an effeminate, sexy East, one filled with harems, voluptuous belly dancers and blue-veiled men on horses and camels in the desert. It is a fantasy created by Orientalists, come true in Hollywood, of a world the West has a subliminal desire to penetrate, to dominate.

This romanticized imagery, though, is harshly challenged by the memory of Arabs defeating Crusaders, and recently by almost two decades of humiliation by an Islamic Revolution and an omnipresent Khomeini, from Americans held hostage to marines blown out of Beirut.

It was more than a Vietnam syndrome that Bush seemed to be combatting, and not only his own "wimp image" but America's as well. CNN helped him do it. It mastered the drama of war and victory. The American public was seduced and tamed.

The only moment during the conflict in which Iraqis were shown as persons were those of undignified surrender

Beginning with its opening graphics, CNN presented the Gulf conflict as a drama intensifying daily and hourly—building in suspense as Desert Shield, with its allusions of protectiveness, threatened to turn into Desert Storm as the deadline of January 15 neared. At the very moment when the United States began its unprecedented bombing attacks by high-tech weaponry in Baghdad, the earlier cooler colors of "Crisis in the Gulf" turned into "War in the



Gulf" in red and goldish-yellow, accompanied by the rolling sound of the drums of war, then the deep masculine voice, "This... is CNN."

The dominant television coverage was of the Allied Commander of Desert Storm, General Norman Schwarzkopf in military fatigues, exuding an air of unquestioned authority, as he granted an intimidated and passive press pool regular briefings about a "theater of operation"—a reaffirmation of masculinized power, mastery and domination, not only over the desert but over the information flow.

Graphs and video images showed pilots inside high-tech war machines looking at dehumanized targets—images of military supremacy over a demonized enemy that had dared to stand up to the U.S.—in a war described as "surgical," "sanitized" and "antiseptic." Damage was worded in strategic and military terms. The military projected U.S. successes and enemy losses,

picture. The only moments during the conflict in which Iraqis were shown as persons were those of undignified surrender—Iraqi soldiers capitulating, described as lice-ridden, dirty, starved, dehydrated and disoriented because of their uncaring cruel leadership. One telling scene was that of an Iraqi captive kissing the boots of a U.S. soldier in the desert. The effect of a certain framing and camera angle and a selectivity of material created an image of humiliation—the ultimate submission to Western colonial powers. Bowing to the West and kissing its feet, the East (Arabs and Muslims) was finally subdued, subordinated, conquered.

Viewers lost track of the "cause" and rallied behind the U.S. in a fantasy of victory. It became a reflexive experience in which the viewer became emotionally involved and seemed to enter the scenes, to sit in the cockpit and identify with those projecting strength and control through a mental process of becoming one with the image on the screen. Ambiguities and contradictions in the U.S. goals or between image and the facts faded. Flags waved everywhere and yellow ribbons grew bigger. The image built by Washington and television began to take on a life of its own and mingled with the reality.

not as human suffering but "collateral damage," to an audience whose worldview is limited to that of winners and losers, cops and robbers, cowboys and Indians.

How convenient that the "Indians" in this drama are Arabs. The viewer is already conditioned from the familiar portrayal on television and in Hollywood films to think of Arabs as hook-nosed wealthy sheiks, subordinate veiled women, dark-skinned terrorists or Muslim fanatics. Not a pretty

Fadwa El Guindi is a visual anthropologist at El Nil Research, a nonprofit Los Angeles-based foundation for research and ethnographic film on Arab culture. She directed the award-winning El Sebou: Egyptian Birth Ritual, and is currently the film review editor of American Anthropologist. Reprinted with permission, courtesy International Documentary Association.



Peace

Why Peace Isn't Covered

An Interview With Sam Keen

To many, the Persian Gulf War was a tragedy, to others a successful crusade. To Sam Keen, the writer, teacher and scholar of religion who wrote *Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination*, and *Fire in the Belly: On Being a Man*, it was the latest example of the age-old fallacy of projecting our "shadow side" onto a mostly unknown, faceless enemy. Media & Values' editor Rosalind Silver interviewed Keen about the images that shape war, peace and the media's role in creating them.

M&V: Can you explain what you mean by "the hostile imagination?"

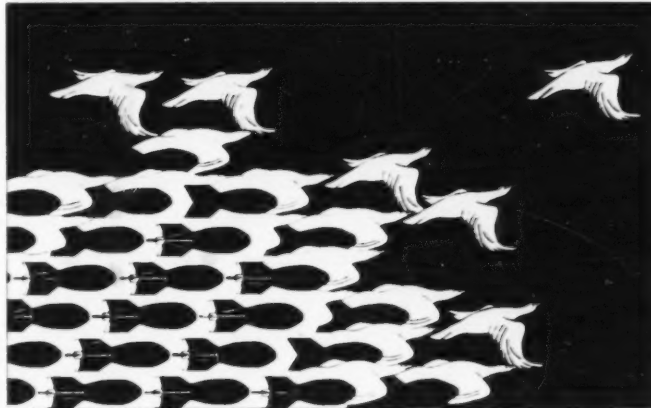
Keen: We first kill people with our minds, before we kill them with weapons. Whatever the conflict, the enemy is always the destroyer. We're on God's side; they're barbaric. We're good, they're evil. War gives us a feeling of moral clarity that we lack at other times.

M&V: What part does the media play in this process?

Keen: It's not always recognized but media play a dual role in the creation of war images, at times propagandistic and at other times prophetic. For example, the cartoonists' recent ratlike images of Hussein and Noriega join a long line of enemy-as-vermin cartoons going back to World War I or even earlier. But other cartoonists were critical from the beginning and played a prophetic role in questioning the Gulf War.

This isn't new, but television has changed things. Its rapid-fire images help to create

a Superbowl atmosphere that puts viewers into a high alpha, dreamlike state that blocks out almost all thought. In the Gulf War this promoted the Nintendo-game atmosphere that made the ultimate dehumanization possible — turning the enemy into a num-



ber, a blip on the radar screen. Instead of a bloody conflict we have a triumph of American technology.

M&V: How susceptible are we to deliberate manipulation?

Keen: In some ways I think we're more susceptible than a less media-attuned country. In a semi-literate country like Nicaragua

welcomed an enemy as a distraction from a depressed economy and domestic troubles.

M&V: Any changes since the war ended?

Keen: While a war is going on it's like the Wizard of Oz working the illusion. We may be able to see the levers, but until it stops we're still fascinated. As soon as the "war-gasm" is over we can ask questions again. Now, even *Time* magazine is asking, "Was it worth it?"

M&V: How can we prevent getting to this state in the future?

Keen: Ultimately, our views of heroism, masculine relationships between men and women and what constitutes a worthwhile life will have to

change. Instead of being propagandistic the media should be our guides and conscience in this process. We need them in their role as prophets to be both a form of collective memory and a fair witness as we struggle to reshape our society.

But before this process can happen, Americans have to reexamine our continual quest for innocence — a kind of perpetually-

renewing virginity. Unless we do, we'll continue to be stuck in what I call the *High Noon* road to the unconscious. It's hard to step out of the showdown long enough to learn that the road to good and evil

runs down the middle of our own souls.

Illustration by T. Ringler, a freelance artist. Copyright © 1982, originally appeared on the cover of Perspectives published by Educators for Social Responsibility.

"There will always be conflicts between persons and nations, but no one condemns us to dehumanize or destroy those with whom we differ."

Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy*

gives the message is pretty much limited to posters. But we have to beware of thinking we're too smart to have the wool pulled over our eyes. To me much of the imagery before and during the Gulf War seemed like conscious manipulation by a president who

 Women

Reporting Conventions Mask Sexual Politics

By Kari Points

The day after the war with Iraq began, I sat in front of my television and listened to a young white U.S. fighter pilot brag about his first bombing mission over Baghdad: "We scored a touchdown, and nobody was home!" I had been paying attention to the impact of the Gulf crisis on women for months, but this pilot's declaration of victory, made just 10 days before the Superbowl on January 27, raised new questions.

As the pilot's comment sank in, I wondered: Do these pilots really think that bombs are as harmless as footballs, that wars are like games, with scoreboards, time limits and cheering fans? Our familiarity with sexist metaphors means that we hear them, but miss the violence they contain. In the United States, we first saw signs of the sexual politics of the Gulf crisis in August, when images of U.S. women soldiers, totting rifles and desert-camouflage backpacks in Saudi Arabia, were paraded on TV screens and in the papers. As polls began to reveal significant gaps between men's and women's

willingness to go to war, the government and the media stepped up efforts to counter the gender gap. We were told that the presence of U.S. women soldiers would have a liberating influence on Arab women, as if the latter were silent, apolitical, and completely controlled by their culture and religion.

Arab women, in fact, were at the forefront of protesting aggression in the Gulf. Kuwaiti women risked their lives protesting the Iraqi invasion—both Amnesty International and Middle East Watch reported nonviolent women's demonstrations in Kuwait as early as August 1990—demonstrations that the Iraqi military fired on.

As the image of the silenced, controlled Arab woman proves to be ever less accu-

rate, so does the picture of the liberated female U.S. soldier. Yet, for women, military service is not much different than domestic employment: 64 percent of the women in the U.S. military have been sexually harassed on the job, according to a recent Department of Defense report. Shortly after troops were deployed to the Gulf, women soldiers became a standard human interest story.

Attempts to sanitize the Gulf War and make it more "spectator compatible" did not stop with comparisons to football. The *New York Times*' "War Notebook" in February 1991 included the term "Ninja woman." Used by troops to refer to Saudi women dressed and veiled in black, the connotation was that Saudi women are not real people with real lives, but rather something exotic and mysterious.

"The violence of war is profoundly connected to the violence against women."

Colleen Roach, Media Development

Nor did attempts to make war seem entertaining stop once U.S. troops came home. At a celebration for returning soldiers, a young man proudly wore a T-shirt with the words "U.S. World Tour." Below this was a list of "venues"—countries the United States has overpowered militarily in recent years. Is Iraq the most recent stop on the military world tour?

All these attempts to render war as "harmless" as hometown sports, action-packed movies and popular music tours separate soldiers as well as U.S. civilians from war's brutality and ethical bankruptcy. For women, though, the analogies do something else that is especially frightening. Football is an aggressive sport played by males, for males, with women present, ide-

ally, only to cheerlead. Martial arts movies have been condemned for their excessive violence, as well as for the racist messages they often convey about Asians and "the Orient." And women have criticized the images of sexual violence against women in heavy metal music, an industry dominated by white male performers.

The metaphors of explicit sexual violence are the most frightening of all. Listening to the U.S. military talk about the conflict, I began to realize that the United States was being portrayed as the masculine conqueror and Iraq as the feminine victim. An Air Force pilot at the start of the war predicted "it will just be 'Slam, bam, thank you Saddam.'" As reported in *Ms.* (March/April 1991) when Hussein rallied his troops to fight "the mother of all battles,"

one Air Force officer responded with a challenge smacking of domestic violence: "Tell him Dad's coming to kick Mom's butt." Most chilling of all, the *Washington Post* reported

in January that "fighter pilots aboard the U.S.S. John F. Kennedy watched porno movies before their bombing missions."

We are used to seeing women as victims of violence; so we don't keep track of the impact of the Gulf War on actual women—in particular the women of Iraq and Kuwait. No cheering fans support the women, particularly the refugee women, who bear the primary responsibility for rebuilding their families' lives and their communities.

Kari Points is program assistant for women's issues at the Presbyterian United Nations Office. Copyright © 1991 by Christianity and Crisis, Inc. Reprinted with permission from the June 10, 1991 issue of Christianity and Crisis.





Canadian View

More Diversity Found in Coverage

By Barrie Zwicker

With Canadian troops serving in the United Nations task force and U.S. television beamed across the border, Canadian perspectives of Gulf War coverage were often similar to U.S. views.

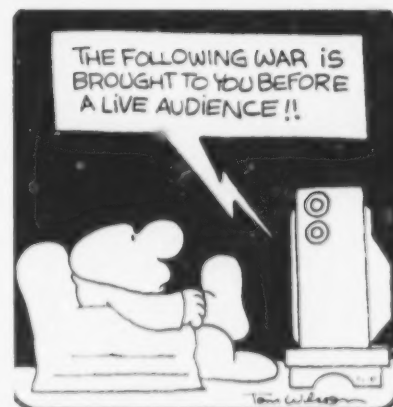
Like Americans, most Canadians probably believe that authorities are justified in muzzling the news for security reasons in wartime—even though no one can point to a single Canadian military life lost as a result of disclosure of sensitive information since at least 1946.

The probably related belief that the media "lost" the Vietnam War helps to justify censorship, even though many post-Gulf War viewers, both American and Canadian, agree that censorship was a major flaw in coverage of the conflict.

But differences in perspective still exist and at least some of them can be traced to a greater Canadian openness to war criticism and anti-war coverage. A few months after

the war ended a spokesman for the Canadian Arab Federation, for example, said Arab viewpoints were more fully represented on the publicly-owned Canadian Broadcasting Corporation than on either U.S. mainstream media or on privately-owned Canadian media outlets.

This points to one of the relevant media differences between the two countries: there's nothing comparable to the CBC south of the border. As a wholly government-owned network accountable to Parliament, the CBC doesn't face the same commercial and viewer pressures as, say, PBS. On coast-to-coast CBC Radio programs such *Morningside* (9 a.m. to noon every weekday), *Ideas* and *Prime Time* (an hour every weeknight) and *Sunday Morning* (9 a.m. to noon on Sundays), effective opposition voices are frequently heard during in-depth features. One-hour documentaries are not uncommon.



At the onset of the war, for instance, CBC Radio inaugurated a 24-hour-a-day schedule. It became a radio version of CNN, but with more questions asked and more background provided, it was easier for viewers to draw their own conclusions.

In *Alphabet City*, a new Canadian critical journal spawned by reaction to Gulf War media coverage, CBC-TV News chief correspondent and anchorperson Peter Mansbridge describes the creation of a news team of researchers from varied Middle Eastern backgrounds "to examine the situation from as many perspectives as possible." He recounts the CBC commitment to "cover this conflict from a Canadian perspective," a prewar commitment the network honored.

Peter Desbarats, dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of Western Ontario told the audience of a *Media File* (CBC Radio) special on Gulf War coverage during July 1991 that the conflict was "a great victory for American arms and a total defeat for American news media. We in Canada shared in that military victory and in that defeat."

The special included a long interview with U.S. media critic Edward Herman, who said the U.S. mainstream media were "bamboozled" by White House "big lies" about the war. Canadian mainstream media, especially the CBC and *The Toronto Star*, the country's largest circulation daily, were less taken in. Simply put, Canadian media provide more diversity of coverage and opinion than their U.S. counterparts. Personally, as a Canadian media consumer, I'll take diversity of opinion over so-called objectivity any time.

Barrie Zwicker is a Canadian media critic, publisher and is currently writing a book about coverage of the Persian Gulf crisis.

Re: Action

A Look at War Film Images

Popular films articulate the desires, fears and aspirations of our culture. Analysis of recent war films can shed light on cultural beliefs about heroism, politics, the military and views of authority, justice, patriotism, family and gender relationships.

The following questions can be a starting point for analysis of such films as *Rambo: First Blood Part 2*, *Top Gun*, *The Star Wars Trilogy*, *Red Dawn*, *An Officer and a Gentleman* (pro-war) and *Das Boot*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Platoon*, *Full Metal Jacket*, *Casualties of War* (anti-war), or add your own ideas.

1. Is high-tech equipment the star of the show? How do the characters who operate it relate to it?

2. How is the enemy represented? Do filmmakers make use of stereotypes and

demonization?

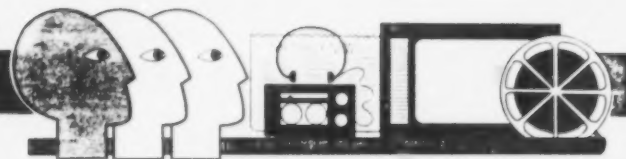
3. Does the film present violence and aggression as the only way to solve problems or are other solutions portrayed?

4. What are the main characters fighting for? Does the film affirm the dominant system and status quo or does it question it? Does it have a point of view on current social issues?

5. What does the film say about what it means to be a male person? a female person? Are women foils for the male characters or real people?

6. Is there a system of beliefs (myths) that characterize a particular class or group, such as men?

—Adapted from *Media and the Gulf War: A Case Study* by The Association for Media Literacy, Ontario, Canada.



HOW MEDIA SELLS IMAGES OF THE ENEMY: *A Special Pull-out Page*

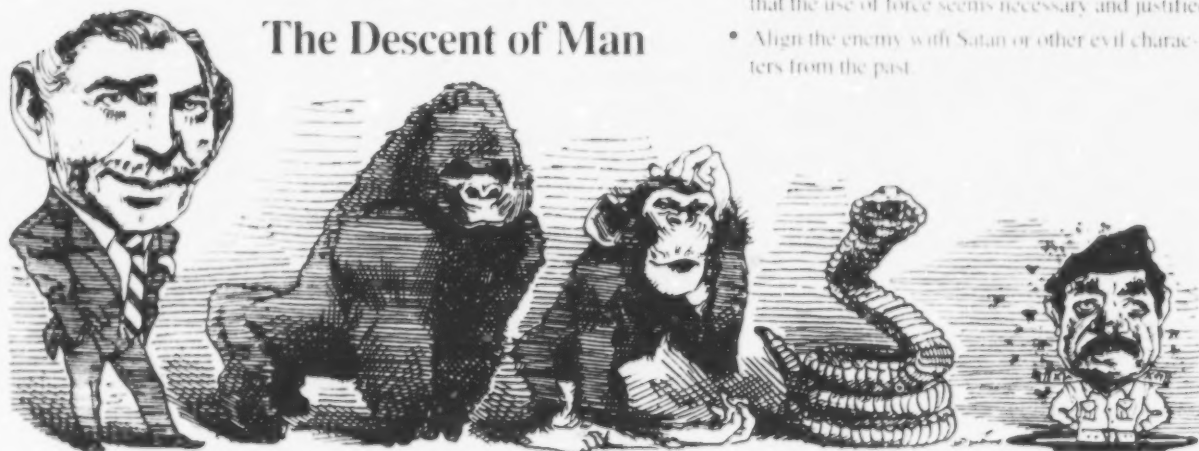
By J. Francis Davis

Look carefully at the face of the enemy. The lips are curled downward. The eyes are fanatical and far away. The flesh is contorted and molded into the shape of monster or beast. Nothing suggests this man ever laughs, is torn by doubts, or shaken by tears. He feels no tenderness or pain. Clearly he is unlike us. We need have no sympathy, no guilt, when we destroy him.

— Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy*

The following excerpts illustrate some of the most common ways that we dehumanize each other, positioning ourselves as allies of God, peace and truth, and our enemies as allies of Satan, chaos and deception. As you read these articles, mark or highlight words, adjectives, references or other techniques that:

- Simplify the conflict into one of good versus evil.
- Depict the enemy as so horrible or unreasonable that the use of force seems necessary and justified.
- Align the enemy with Satan or other evil characters from the past.



Cartoon by The New York Times Company. Reprinted by permission.

Gulf Signs Hint Peace Possible

By Johanna Neumann
USA TODAY, p. 1A
Dec 31, 1991-Jan. 1, 1991

A diplomatic solution to the Persian Gulf crisis may be found before war begins, congressional leaders said Sunday. "My gut tells me that there will be a resolution without firing a shot," said Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole, R-Kan. Dole and Democrats said the White House should redouble its diplomatic efforts.

But Iraq's President Saddam Hussein — facing a Jan. 15 U.N. deadline to withdraw from Kuwait — blasted President Bush and Saudi King Fahd for having foreign troops on Muslim soil.

"In this confrontation those who betrayed

the teachings of Jesus Christ have been trapped by the devil — may God curse them all," he said, calling Bush a "Judas" and Fahd a "traitor of the two holy mosques."

Bush told *Time* magazine he too has a "gut feeling" Iraq will surrender — prompting Iraqi Information Minister Latif Jassim to suggest Sunday that Bush "must have been drunk."

"If Bush starts a war, he will not be able to stop it," Jassim added. "We will show the world that America is a paper tiger. You will see how the Americans will kneel down."

Iraq said Sunday that Muslim delegates from 17 countries will attend a three-day conference in Baghdad Jan. 9 to defy the U.N. ultimatum.

But Rep. Lee Hamilton, D-Ind., told CBS's *Face the Nation* there are some signs that "indicate a diplomatic solution may work." He cited fresh appeals by Germany's foreign minister for a new diplomatic solution.

And House Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin, D-Wis., said Saddam has "a history of doing a 180-degree turn... when he comes up against a stone wall."

REFLECTION RESOURCE

Violence a Way of Life for Iraqi Leader

By John Omicinski
USA TODAY, p. 2A
Thursday, Jan. 17, 1991

As a young man Saddam Hussein was a chillingly creative professional assassin. The Iraqi president has never flinched at violence.

Saddam, an orphan, learned violence under the tutelage of an uncle who took part in a World War II pro-Nazi coup that failed. His official biography says that at 7 he carried a pistol to school. By age 20, he had killed a foe of his uncle.

By 1959, at 22, he was a professional,

chosen by the Ba'ath party as one of a 10-man hit squad to kill dictator Gen. Abdel Karim Kassam. The plot failed, but it helped write Saddam's legend. His story was that he escaped, dug a bullet out of his leg with a knife, then rode a donkey 300 miles to Syria.

In 1969, Saddam won a long-sought law degree. He showed up for exams with a revolver in his belt and four armed guards.

Besides ordering the deaths of thousands,

including a brother-in-law who died in a helicopter crash officially blamed on a sandstorm, he reportedly has pulled the trigger himself.

He is said to have discussed battlefield losses with a general, then ordered him into the next room and killed him. There are reports the same fate befell a cabinet minister who suggested Saddam step aside during the Iran-Iraq war. His dismembered body later was shipped to his family.

Remarks in Congress During the Debate Over Military Action in Iraq

Representative Robert H. Michael
Republican of Illinois
New York Times International, p. A8
Friday, January 11, 1991

I speak from the prejudice of being a combat veteran of World War II. And those of our generation know from bloody experience that unchecked aggression against a small nation is a prelude to an international disaster.

Saddam Hussein today has more planes and tanks and, frankly, men under arms, than Hitler had at the time when Prime Minister Chamberlain came back from Munich with that miserable piece of paper—peace in our time. I'll never forget that replay of that movie in my life.

And I have an obligation, I guess, coming from that generation, to transmit those thoughts I had at the time to the younger generation who didn't experience what we did. Saddam Hussein not only invaded

Kuwait, he occupied, terrorized, murdered civilians, systematically looted and turned a peaceful nation into a wasteland of horror. He seeks control over one of the world's vital resources, and he ultimately seeks to make himself the unchallenged anti-Western dictator of the Mideast.

Either we stop him now, and stop him permanently, or we won't stop him at all.

Senator Alfonse M. D'Amato
Republican of New York
New York Times International, p. A10
Sunday, Jan. 13, 1991

Mr. President, Saddam Hussein is like a glutton, a geo-political glutton. He's sitting down at the banquet table overflowing with goodies. And let me tell you, like every glutton, he's going to have them all. Kuwait is just the appetizer. He's gobbling it up. But it's not going to satisfy him. After a noisy belch or two, he's going to reach across the table for the next morsel. Now what's it going to be—Saudi Arabia? Could be. The U.A.E. (United Arab Emirate)? Who knows? I don't.

Possible Discussion Questions and Ideas

1. Compare the words and techniques that you noticed when reading the above articles to those found by others. Explain why yours or other's ideas differ.
2. What other examples of dehumanizing the enemy do you remember—either from the Gulf War or other wars?
3. Rewrite one of the articles (or one or two paragraphs) from the opposite perspective. Which version is closer to the truth? How might you discover which is closer to the truth?
4. The U.S. media and government accused Saddam Hussein of many crimes. Of what similar crimes might an Iraqi or other group legitimately accuse President Bush?



CENTER FOR MEDIA AND VALUES

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WATCH, READ, LISTEN

Resources for Follow-up

IN PRINT

• **Who's Calling the Shots?** Draws on interviews with parents and teachers and observations of children at war play, offers suggestions, practical ideas and resources for beneficial war play and combating consumerism. Nancy Carlsson-Paige and Diane E. Levin (1990). New Society Publishers, 4527 Springfield Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143; (800) 333-9093, \$12.95.

• **The "Uncensored War": The Media and Vietnam** by Daniel C. Hallin critiques the conventional wisdom about the media's coverage of and influence on the Vietnam War (1986). Oxford University Press, 201 Evans Rd., Cary, NC 27513-2009; (800) 415-7556, \$27.95.

• **The Media at War: The Press and the Persian Gulf Conflict**, edited by Craig LaMay, Martha FitzSimon and Jeanne Sahadi, assesses the performance of the press during the Gulf crisis through historical and legal analysis and survey research (1991). Freedom Forum for Media Studies, Columbia University, 2950 Broadway, New York, NY 10027; (212) 280-8392, free.

• **The Persian Gulf War series: The Media and Our Right to Know**, a collection of articles that discuss the issues of access to information and media control (1991), \$7.50. **Iraq Under Fire** reviews the background to the crisis and its effects in the U.S., as well as the media's role (1991), \$6. DataCenter, 464 19th St., Oakland, CA 94612; (415) 835-4692.

• **Media and the Gulf War: A Case Study** provides a media literacy approach to the Gulf War and to the study of news (1991). Association for Media Literacy, 40 McArthur St., Weston, Ontario M9P 3M7, Canada; (416) 394-6990, \$5 prepaid.

• **Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination** examines those forces that drive both individuals and societies to create and stigmatize enemies (1991). HarperCollins, 1000 Keystone Industrial Park, Scranton, PA 18512; (800) 242-7737, \$16.95. Also available as a video: 58 minutes (1987). Caticus Corp., 2600 10th St., Berkeley, CA 94710; (415) 548-0854. VHS: \$89.95, rental: \$25, 16mm: \$300, rental: \$100.

• **Journalists at War: The Dynamics of News Reporting During the Falklands Conflict** looks at journalists at work during unusual wartime

conditions, based on interviews with journalists, military figures and politicians involved in the Falklands conflict. David E. Morrison and Howard Tumber (1988). \$18.95. **Media Coverage of Terrorism** edited by A. Odiasio Alah and Kenoye Kely in Eke, considers a definition of terrorism and media's role in coverage (1991), \$21.95. Sage Publications, 2455 Teller Rd., Newbury Park, CA 91320; (805) 299-0721.

• **The Gulf War: A Study of the Media, Public Opinion & Public Knowledge** by Justin Lewis, Sut Jhally and Michael Morgan deals with the consequences of the television coverage of the Gulf War (1991). The Center for the Study of Communication, Department of Communication, University of Massachusetts/Amherst, Machmer Hall, Amherst, MA 01003; (413) 545-1311, \$5.

• **Media Control: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda**, the tenth pamphlet from the Open

Magazine Pamphlet Series, examines media control by government and how it affects the coverage of war, specifically the Persian Gulf War. Noam Chomsky (1991). Open Magazine Pamphlet Series, P.O. Box 2726, Westfield, NJ 07091; (908) 789-9608, \$3.50.

• **Extra!** Volume 4, Number 3, special issue discusses the censorship and pro-war attitudes of the media during the Gulf War (May 1991). FAIR/Extra!, 175 Fifth Ave., Suite 2245, New York, NY 10010; (800) 562-1973, \$2.50.

SIGHT/SOUND

• **Kids Ask About War** addresses the fear and confusion children suffer due to the images and threat produced during the recent Gulf War, 30 minutes (1991). PBS Video, 1320 Braddock Pl., Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 739-5390, purchase: \$5.95.

• **Special Report: After the War** with Bill Moyers, presents a post-war critique of the Gulf War media coverage, 57 minutes (1991). Public Affairs Television, Inc., 356 West 58th St., New York, NY 10019, Attn: Naomi Golf, purchase: \$20.

• **The Media and the Iraq War** looks at the Pentagon's censorship versus our right to know, 29 minutes (1991). **The Language of War** examines how language and jargon are used to clarify or camouflage the reality of war, 29 minutes (1990). Center for Defense Information, 1500 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 862-0700, purchase: \$25, \$19 for teachers.

ORGANIZATIONS

• **Center for War, Peace and the News Media** dedicated to gathering and disseminating information internationally on the issues of war and peace in the media, publish "Deadline" newsletter bimonthly. Also, an upcoming bibliography on Gulf War coverage due in November. Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, New York University, 10 Washington Pl., New York, NY 10003; (212) 998-7960.

• **The National Campaign to Demilitarize Our Schools** works to eliminate the influence of the military in schools. NCDOS, c/o AFSC Youth and Militarism Program, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102; (215) 241-7176.

Create Discussion With Video and Workshop Kit

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An excellent discussion-starter, this short video raises questions that the media forgot during Operation Desert Storm. Produced by filmmakers Ed Griffin-Nolan and Peter Wirth in conjunction with Witness for Peace and Fellowship of Reconciliation. *Lines in the Sand* contains exclusive never-broadcast footage shot in Iraq at the end of the war, \$19.95.

Images of Conflict

A Media Literacy Workshop Kit™

Bring the pages of this issue of *Media & Values* to life in your classroom or discussion group. The kit includes step-by-step leader's guide, handout masters and everything you need for two or more provocative sessions on the lessons we learned about media during the Gulf War. For youth or adults, \$19.95.

Save \$5! Order the kit *plus* the video for only \$34.95. Send payment to Center for Media and Values, 1962 S. Shennandoah, Los Angeles, CA 90034, or call (213) 559-2944 for MC or VISA orders. CMV members, don't forget your 10% discount.

MEDIA LITERACY

Strengthening Democracy



By Elizabeth Thorman, Executive Director

If there is one characteristic of contemporary life now and in the future, it is that we live in a pervasive media environment. Television and video, movies and music are not "mindless" entertainments.

While I am not among those who denounce "the media" for ruining our world, neither do I take their presence lightly. As a global citizen, I want to know more about how they are influencing me, my neighbors and the world we live in. We can no longer treat TV as a trivial pursuit. We can no longer turn up our noses even at its silly sitcoms or ridiculous *Wrestle-Mania*.

In the 1990s we must learn to tend this media environment — the *ideas* we breathe — just as in the '80s we learned to care for the forests, oceans, air and the rest of our physical environment. At stake is the empowerment of individuals and the strengthening of society's democratic structures.

If you doubt this, I ask you simply to go back in your mind to the days after January 16 of this year when we found ourselves in a living laboratory for discovering just how influential the media are in our world today.

Everywhere I went, and perhaps you, too, people were talking — not just about the Scuds and Patriots, the "smart bombs" and "surgical strikes" — but about the *media*:

- whether they were addicted to CNN;
- what would be the impact on kids;
- whether military censorship of the news was justified;
- how they were learning to compare information from several sources.

Whether we agree or disagree with the politics of the Gulf War, one fact remains: When an electronic box in 180 million living rooms can transform the killing of thousands of people into an antiseptic high-tech video game, we have some serious work to do as justice seekers, as educators, as people committed to creating a world

where our children can grow up in peace.

And now we are developing the tools to help us with this task.

This issue and its accompanying Media Literacy Workshop KitTM (and video) are an entry point for the continued public dis-

cussion of every size and shade of opinion."

He challenges teachers to break the media's spell by empowering students to make their own independent judgments about what they see, hear and read. Without media education, he proposes, a society can-

"Without media education a society cannot have the critically informed citizenry necessary for a functioning democracy."

Len Masterman

cussion and exploration of issues that face us as citizens in an age of instant global communications. Chief among them is the challenge of covering significant issues — from political elections to foreign policy — that, more and more, are based on images rather than facts.

Len Masterman, professor of education at the University of Nottingham in England and author of the media literacy "bible," *Teaching the Media*, writes that we must expand our concept of advertising to include not just "paid for" ads but "the manufacture and management of information... whose practitioners include national governments, special interest groups and insti-

not have the critically informed citizenry necessary for a functioning democracy.

In the United States, media literacy education is slow in coming. The Center for Media and Values stands nearly alone in pioneering this important field. Membership is growing, but we do not yet have the critical mass needed to create a significant impact on the education world.

As a first-time reader, you can help by joining the Center — *today*. If you're already a member, send your renewal promptly and invite others to join. (We'll send you any quantity of free membership brochures if you can put them to good use.)

If you are a teacher or a group leader with youth or adults, I invite you test our Media Literacy Workshop KitsTM, a new generation of media education tools for the 1990s. Kits are free to organizational members and available for purchase by others.

Research indicates that the critical skills of media literacy can be taught and, through guided practice, can become everyday habits for both adults and youth. After our experience with the media during the Gulf War and with an election year coming up, the movement for media literacy in the U.S. can't happen too soon.

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Back issues with future ideas about current trends

Some say that **Media&Values** is ahead of its time, which means that these back issues offer you the information you need just in time to keep on top of the dynamic media age in which we live. Perhaps most helpful of all, each issue contains several unique features that make it ideal for use in classrooms, discussion groups, conferences, youth programs, parenting classes and more. As the leading resource for media awareness education, **Media&Values** is an invaluable reference and tool for teachers, for leaders, for everyone concerned about the media today.



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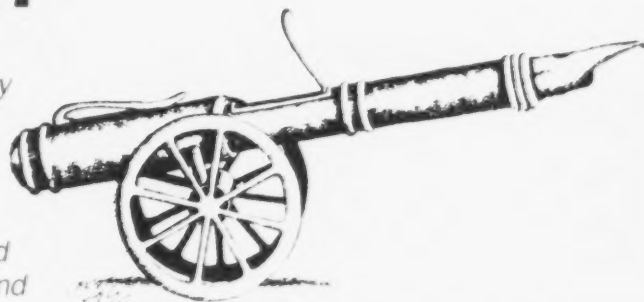
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Is the Media Mightier Than the Sword?

The drama of the Persian Gulf War had many battles, including an ongoing one with the media. At the same time, instantaneous global coverage demonstrated television's power as a political player. No longer can any of us deny the impact and influence of the media on the world stage and in our own living rooms.

The Center for Media and Values announces a timely new resource package to help you explore the lessons we can learn about media, about war — and about ourselves.



**"I'm going to
miss your show."**

Johnny Carson
to Lt. General Thomas Kelly
at the end of
the Persian Gulf War.

■ Images of Conflict

A Media Literacy Workshop Kit™

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Images of Conflict includes one copy of this Media&Values issue, The Media: in War and Peace. Order additional copies at these low rates: 5-50, 20% off; 51 or more, 40% off.

* Or receive the kit free with your organizational membership in the Center for Media and Values: \$75/year. Membership card and details inside. Members receive 10% discount on additional resources, including videos.

From Awareness to Action:

Media Literacy for the '90s

Introducing a new approach to media literacy education using Media Literacy Workshop Kits™

By Jay F. Davis

Educational Services Coordinator
Center for Media and Values



*"If audiences begin
to choose their
media less
automatically and
more intentionally,
those cumulative
acts of choice
will ultimately
change the nature
of our media
environment."*

— Elizabeth Thoman

Media & Values is more than just a magazine. It's a tool, a catalyst, for leading you — or helping you lead others — from awareness to action on the many issues raised by today's mass media and new communications technologies.

Whether you're a teacher, counselor, community organizer, youth worker, religious leader, or just an active media watcher of any age, the ideas and activities in the enclosed workshop kit can help you examine your media environment and begin to challenge and change it.

Still, there are no quick-fix solutions to issues like sexual violence in the media, bias in the news or advertising directed to children. Media Literacy Workshop Kits™ provide a place to begin. Each Kit is a ready-to-go resource for bringing these and other issues to your group—not just by showing a film or watching a video, but by examining the underlying messages, assumptions, and worldview of mass media.

Most importantly, Media Literacy Workshop Kits™ are designed to *empower* media users. After participating in a Media and Values Workshop program, participants will do things like:

- Talk to children, friends and colleagues about the media and its social and political influence.
- No longer just turn on the TV or a video game; rather, they will deliberately choose media experiences to which they want to be exposed.
- Seek out alternative sources for news and information.
- Talk back to the television.
- Identify common techniques used by advertisers to convince them to buy products, thus becoming less responsive to those techniques.
- Support smaller, local media outlets (newspapers and magazines, cable channels, radio, etc.).
- Create media experiences (videotapes, audio tapes, newsletters) that express their own viewpoints.
- Identify needs the mass media fill in their own lives so that they begin to pick and use the media to meet those needs more effectively.
- Write letters to advertisers, TV stations, radio deejays, sitcom producers.
- Question the role advertising plays in fueling the consumer lifestyle, perhaps beginning to consume less and thus live more responsibly.

Of course, all these will not happen overnight. These are instead the kinds of activities Media and Values Workshop sessions are designed to elicit over many years. Media education is a lifelong process.

Why Study the Media?

In *Teaching the Media*, Len Masterman lists seven reasons that media literacy education is important:

*"Media education
is both essential
to the exercising
of our democratic
rights and a
necessary
safeguard against
the worst excesses
of media
manipulation
for political
purposes."*

— Len Masterman

1. Media saturation. Television is not the only mass medium that accounts for media saturation. When one considers pop music, radio, newspapers, magazines, computers and video games — in addition to TV — we are exposed to more mass media messages in one day than our grandparents were exposed to in a month.

2. Media influence. The media sell "audience consciousness." The media are deliberately trying to predispose people to buy not just certain detergents, cars and aspirin, but to *buy*.

3. The manufacture and management of information. Most governments and businesses have "PR" departments (whether they call them that or not), whose purpose is to get "good news" about them into public consciousness. Many are succeeding to an unguessed degree. Much of what is reported as "news," in fact, comes directly from PR departments and press releases.

4. Media education and democracy. Political leaders have discovered the influence of the media. Those who use the media well get their way regardless of public policy or personal integrity.

5. The increasing importance of visual communication and information. For hundreds of years, society has valued reading and understanding the meaning of texts. Yet in today's society, visual image is arguably more important than the printed word. There has been no corresponding focus on reading the meaning of visual images.

6. The growing privatization of information. The world economy is fast becoming an information economy. Information is a commodity to be bought and sold. A danger exists that new classes of "information-rich" and "information-poor" may result, with the information-poor unable to afford the information they need to better their lives.

7. Educating for the future. The above issues will not decline in importance. Tomorrow's world, in fact, will be increasingly dominated by mass media and communications technologies. Generations of the future will need to understand how the mass media influence society.

Settings for Media and Values Workshops

Media and Values Workshops are designed for adults and older teens. They can be used in a variety of group settings:

- by parenting groups who want to learn media literacy skills in order to pass them on to their children, the leaders of the future.
- by educators and counselors in secondary school classrooms.
- by religious leaders of all faiths who recognize the responsibility of helping young people (and adults) live a life of virtue and value in the midst of a mass media society.
- by a creative leader who can adapt Media and Values Workshops for use with a scout troop, youth club, or youth service group.
- by women's or men's organizations, including senior citizen groups, that provide continuing education or enrichment programs for their members.
- on retreats dealing specifically or in part with the impact of media in our lives — addressing issues like how the media impact our understanding of our sexual selves, how to read through the bias in the news, or the role of the media in saving (or destroying) the environment.
- even by two people over the breakfast table.

What Is Media Literacy Education?

The definition of media literacy education changed significantly during the 1980's. This change can be described as a movement from media education as *discrimination* to media education as *empowerment*.

In the 1970's, in fact, media education was usually conceptualized as a way of helping learners *discriminate* between "good" and "bad" movies and television shows. In this view, still used often today, individuals are taught to appreciate "good" media as they would good art, so that media education means something like art appreciation. A variation of this view tries to determine the moral impact of media, so that "good" television and films are those that encourage "good" moral values.

These aesthetic and moral concerns are important, of course, but in the 1980's media users worldwide began to look closely at the political and economic systems in which Western media have flourished. For the first time, the idea that the media have political, social and economic impact beyond questions of moral or aesthetic content began to be taken seriously. Rather than "What behavior (or attitudes or values) does this television show exhibit?" the questions became "Who in society benefits from the sexism in the media?" and "What are the political implications of violence on television?"

This new approach empowers media users because it acknowledges the listener-viewer's role in determining the impact of media. Rather than demand that the mass media itself protect us from allegedly "immoral" or "undemocratic" influences, this approach suggests that by understanding the political, social and economic influence of the media, media users can gain the power to change the mass media themselves by changing the way they respond to it and interact with it. This kind of empowerment is the essence of democracy. There are at least five principles of this empowerment view of media study:

1. Audiences negotiate meaning. Audiences are not simply "sitting ducks" soaking in everything that they see, read and hear. Personal experiences and conscious choices play roles in determining the effect of any media experience on a person.

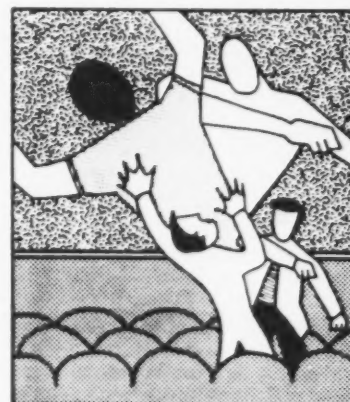
2. Media construct reality. Television, for example, is not a window on the real world. It is a *construction* created by photographers, writers, and editors to communicate specific messages and images.

3. Media present ideologies and value messages. All media are created with specific ideologies and value messages. The furniture and furnishings of the Huxtable household in *The Cosby Show*, for example, idealize a version of upper middle-class lifestyle.

4. Media use identifiable techniques. Advertisers, for example, know how to stimulate desired reactions in audiences. Common techniques include "canting"—tilting a woman's head to make her look seductive, or having men grasp objects tightly, making them appear more virile.

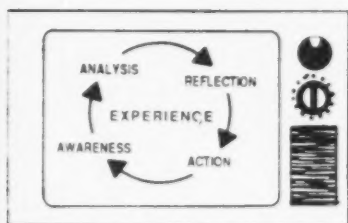
5. Media are businesses with commercial interests. Their primary purpose is not to entertain or inform, but to make money. This means that the media must create an environment compatible to advertising messages. Even editorial content and news must work to insure not just the largest audience, but the largest audience with "disposable" income.

*There is a sense
of powerlessness
when one
confronts the
mass media.
We want to
change that.*



"Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students."

— Paulo Freire



How Does One Teach Media Literacy?

A new approach is required when teaching media literacy. Because students of all ages often know more than the teacher or leader about topics such as rock music, advertising or sex on television, the best learning happens when leaders recognize "teachable moments," capitalizing on participants' own knowledge and interests. Teachers and group leaders should see themselves as "learning facilitators" rather than funnels who siphon facts and knowledge into hinged heads. Teachers may in fact learn more than students.

You do not even have to watch a lot of television or be familiar with classic movies to conduct a Media and Values Workshop. An inquiring mind, an enthusiasm for life and a respect for other people's feelings, beliefs and experiences are the best requirements for being a leader.

Media and Values Workshops use a four-step method of Awareness—Analysis—Reflection—Action that emphasizes this co-learning model.

- **Awareness** is the exploration step. Participants explore a theme, discovering points of tension between personal values and media. A parent group studying video violence might compare notes on the various ways their children of different ages respond to different types of violent images.
- **Analysis** is the process of searching for political, economic, social, cultural and personal context in which to think about the theme. Participants might read an article that explains how advertising segments the public into audience "targets," watch a video that documents how the nightly news is gathered and edited or look for patterns in the way males and females are depicted in magazine ads.
- **Reflection** addresses the question "So what?" The goal is identification of what's right or wrong in light of one's personal values, imagining what ought to be. Participants might become headline editors, rewriting headlines to reflect the point of view of women or minorities rather than the typical white or male perspective.
- **Action** is something done as a result of the first three steps. This may range from simply learning to "talk back" while watching television to becoming involved in a citizen review of a local cable channel.

This process is important and defines generally how Media and Values Workshops flow, yet the process itself is not as important as allowing the group to define content and direction. Ideally, Media and Values Workshops motivate participants to take what they learn and apply it to all their media experiences. Participants are not likely to care about or feel capable of applying their learning to "everyday life" if they feel media study is boring, irrelevant or depends completely on the leader's knowledge. ~

Thus, it is essential to address the ideas, concerns and interests of participants. But don't avoid economic, political, cultural and historical analysis because it seems "heavy" for your group. These are precisely the issues that need to be addressed in order to empower participants.

Media&Values Magazine

A key resource in the Awareness—Analysis—Reflection—Action process is *Media&Values* magazine. Each issue of the magazine explores a specific topic related to the mass media, such as *Media and Money: How the Bottom Line Affects What We See and Read*, or *Children and Television: Growing up in a Media World*.

Media and Values Workshops are built on the theme of one or several issues of *Media&Values*. A copy of the relevant issue is included with each kit. Purchasing additional copies for each participant is optional but not necessary.

The magazine follows the same process as the workshop process. Each issue begins with a series of articles which first raise awareness about the importance of the topic, followed by articles which analyze the topic from sociological, political, cultural, economic and historical perspectives.

Regular columnists reflect on value questions, and a special "Reflection Resource" is always included to help facilitate this reflection in group settings. Finally, interspersed throughout the magazine are "Re-Action" boxes and how-to articles which suggest action steps to take personally, locally or nationally.

In practice, of course, the four steps are much more fluid than this description suggests. The process is, in fact, one of continual new awareness leading to new action which leads again to newer and deeper awareness. Awareness, Analysis, Reflection and Action weave in and out of each other like Navajo cloth.

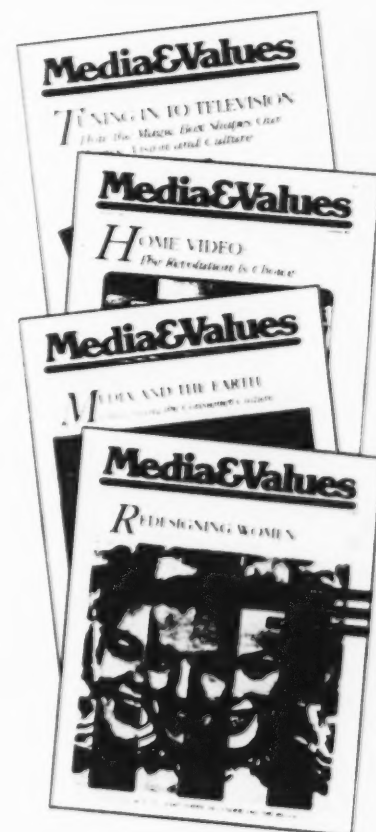
Contents of Media Literacy Workshop Kits™

Your Media Literacy Workshop Kit™ contains three sections:

1. The Leader's Guide, with an introduction to the workshop sessions, and four-page step-by-step plans for leading each session.
2. Quality originals to produce handouts for workshop sessions.
3. Supplementary Resources, like:
 - *Media & Values* magazine(s) for leader preparation and background reading
 - License to reprint *original* information from *Media&Values* for use in newsletters and workshop announcements. This includes permission to reprint the handouts in quantity.
 - Recommended audio-visual resources and how to order them (in the future, the Center for Media and Values plans to create and produce videos related to each workshop issue).
 - Suggestions (including a reproducible form) for evaluation of workshop sessions.

Each workshop session is designed as a self-contained 60-90 minute interactive process (though your group's choices may make sessions longer or shorter). Two or more sessions may be combined by skipping the closing activity of the first session(s), and continuing with the next session. You may want to combine aspects of two closings into one final closing for combined sessions.

Leaders who wish to compress sessions into less than one hour will have to determine whether to leave out an activity, or reduce the amount of time spent on activities. In any case, for shorter sessions it is important that leaders monitor time carefully.



*"Media&Values
may be the most
useful tool available
for sorting out the
media messages,
ideas and values
that swirl around
us each day."*

— Utne Reader

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Tips and Suggestions for Leading Effective Group Sessions on Media Themes and Topics.

A few strategies can set the stage for effective group sessions in media education:

Group Dynamics

- *When possible, arrange seating so that all group members can make eye contact easily.* Chairs can be in a circle or oval. Ask all group members to sit in chairs of the same height — or on the floor. This facilitates group dialogue and strengthens the likelihood of co-learning. Also, don't forget to check things like the size of the room, lighting, and ease of rearrangement (when you will be splitting into smaller groups).
- *Ask questions that begin with "What," "How," "Why," "Which," "When," or "Where."* Don't ask questions that can be answered "Yes," "No" or by a number, like "19."
- *Corollary: Don't fish for what you've determined is the "right" answer.* You'll find your group becoming tentative. If you want the group to know something, just tell them.
- *When asking questions, count to 30 before prodding the group or (even) answering the question yourself.* Many group leaders seem afraid to wait more than a few seconds for the group to respond. If the question is a good one, participants will almost always answer. Give time to ponder.
- *Model answers.* When asking "short response" questions, particularly those for which each participant is expected to give an answer, it's a good idea to answer the question yourself first. This gives participants a moment to think, and gets them on track.
- *Encourage inclusion of all.* Watch to be sure that less talkative group members are included. Perhaps ask, "Jenny, would you like to comment on this?" However, don't pressure or force participants to talk or volunteer. One benefit of breaking up into smaller groups is that participants who seldom speak among larger groups will often talk more openly.
- *Include yourself.* Say "Let's try this activity," not "Why don't you try this..." In teaching about media, often the leader knows less about the subject than other participants! Similarly, when divided into smaller groups it's a good idea to visit and participate with several groups during the course of the session (but warn them you'll be doing this!).
- *When listing participants' ideas on newsprint board, etc., list exact phrases in participants' own words.* Don't summarize to make them easier to write down. Participants will feel their ideas are being taken seriously when you list their phrases. Also, avoid numbering participants' ideas, as this gives the inadvertent impression of prioritizing. Use a dash or dot.
- *When listing, refrain from commenting upon each idea as it is recorded.* Premature discussion stifles and limits creative flow of ideas. Record!
- *Rules for Brainstorming* 1) Anything goes. Any idea will be recorded. 2) No discussion allowed. Discussion will take place afterwards. 3) No making fun of others' ideas.

When it comes to values in the media, the important thing is not to know all the answers but to raise the right questions.

- *Keep groups apprised of where they are in the schedule.* Particularly in small group exercises, tell participants how long the activity will take, then warn them when half of their time is gone (for example, "We should be about half-way finished"), and when a minute or two is left. When time is up, call groups back together. It's okay to "not quite finish."
- *Always evaluate.* You may learn about personal hindrances to learning caused by your leadership or by your group. A sample evaluation form is enclosed, or try something more creative (see the enclosed handout "Creative Evaluation Ideas"). But do it. Let us know of both positive and negative comments (return a summary copy of the enclosed evaluation form to: Workshop Coordinator, Center for Media and Values, 1962 S. Shenandoah, Los Angeles, CA 90034).
- Relax and learn along with the group.

Using VCR's (and Other Electronic Equipment)

- *Test all audio-visual and electronic equipment before use.* Know how to use it or have a knowledgeable person who is responsible. Check the volume, check the picture, have it set to the correct place (or know how to use the counter if you're using two clips from the same tape). It's distracting to wait while someone tries to figure out why the VCR or stereo isn't working. Also, be sure the monitor is big enough for all group members to see easily, or that you have enough monitors for comfortable viewing. Consider having one monitor for each 25-30 participants.
- *Always preview material.* Choose material appropriate for your group — even if you have to modify the workshop process.
- *Design activities to take place during viewing.* For example, say "let's note examples of politically-charged language," or "let's look for brand name logos that reveal who paid for the film."
- *View short segments, no more than about 5 minutes — and keep the lights on if possible.* Keep participants from being lulled into couch potato-dom.
- *Remove snow on VCR's.* Set the on-line button (also called "liner tuner") on the VCR to "line." When you turn off the tape, you won't be bombarded by "white noise." If your VCR doesn't have an on-line button, buy two audio-video output jacks and put one in "Audio In" and the other in "Video In" in the back of the VCR. This fools the VCR and has the same effect.

Recommended Reading

Teaching the Media, by Len Masterman. Simply the best book on media education for teachers. (1985) Routledge, 29 W. 35th St., New York, 10001-2291. 212-244-0412. Canadian toll free: 800-634-7064. u.s \$15.95.

Questioning the Media, edited by Downing, Mohammadi, Sreberny-Mohammadi. Outstanding compilation of essays providing a framework for analyzing all forms of mass media. (1990) SAGE, 2455 Teller Rd., Newbury Park, CA 91320. 805-499-0721. u.s \$24.

A Note About Videotape Copyright Restrictions

Since we often recommend that groups view commercially available video tapes, a few notes about U.S. copyright restrictions are appropriate. The following is not legal advice — it is your responsibility to assure that resources you use are shown honestly and legally. For more information, contact Dr. Jerome Miller of Copyright Information Services, (206) 378-5128.

1. According to "fair use" practice in U.S. copyright law, schools may show portions of videotapes and television shows for educational purposes in regularly scheduled classes. Videotapes may not be shown in the classroom for entertainment or recreation. Off-air recordings must be used within 10 "teaching days," but may be retained for 45 days for evaluative purposes. Video segments should come from a legal copy (one that is rented or purchased).

2. With respect to religious organizations, there is an unfortunate lack of clarity about just what is allowable under U.S. "fair use" provisions. Use discretion and be sure to adhere to the rules outlined in the preceding paragraph. For more information, write the National Council of Churches Communications Office, Room 860, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115-0050. Ask for the free pamphlet: "Video Copyright Guidelines for Pastors and Church Workers."

3. Canadian copyright laws differ from U.S. laws. Contact your organizational institutional office for advice or write the Association for Media Literacy, 40 McArthur St., Weston, Ontario, M9P 3M7.

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Media literacy in the '90s
isn't just possible; it's part of a group
with the John D. and Catherine T.
MacArthur Foundation.

About the Center for Media and Values

The Center for Media and Values is a not-for-profit educational membership organization which empowers media users by providing resources for critical awareness about media. Growing out of the acclaimed *Media & Values* magazine, the Center was established in 1989 to achieve the following goals:

1. Develop and articulate a new way of thinking about and helping others to think about the impact and influence of mass media in society and in our individual lives. That is, stimulate a *new educational process* of awareness, analysis, reflection, action on issues of television and mass media.

2. Build a media aware community and membership "movement" of organizations, school systems, parents and individuals who thoughtfully examine the impact of mass media in our time and promote media literacy in formal and informal educational sites.

3. Organize an information resource center and "think tank" to serve and stimulate the emerging field of media literacy, particularly in the U.S.

4. Become a recognized and respected public voice for the vision of media literacy among educators, the religious and social service communities, public policy leaders and the media itself.

Membership

Join the Center for Media and Values and join the movement for media awareness! Membership gives you first access to new resources as they are published — plus the opportunity to learn from others and share your own experiences in media literacy education.

Personal Membership is for individual teachers, leaders, parents or concerned media users. Benefits include:

- a year's subscription to *Media & Values*
- *Connect*, the members-only newsletter to keep in touch with the movement
- access to our telephone hotline for program planning assistance
- discounts on all Center publications and educational resources
- the satisfaction of helping to develop the first organization to create a national vision for media education and literacy

Annual Membership U.S. \$40 / CAN. \$44

Organizational Membership is for schools, churches, synagogues, community centers, parenting programs, etc. Organizational members receive all the benefits of personal members plus:

- A step-by-step leader's guide for each issue outlining a three-hour program for adult or youth groups
- Three copies of each quarterly *Media & Values* issue — for reference and teaching
- License to reprint from Center publications

Annual Membership U.S. \$75 / CAN. \$90 (locally based organizations)
\$25 / \$2500 (national organizations)

Contributing Memberships are invited and are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Benefits include *Media & Values* and *Connect* as well as recognition in the Center's annual report.

- *Friends of the Center* U.S. \$50 / \$500 / year
- *Founding Friends* U.S. \$1000 / year
- *Corporate/Institute Friends* \$500 U.S. \$5000 / year

Layout design by Edith Halberstam

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